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Introduction

From the Bible to Science Fiction, the ways Western society positions and sees itself in regard to the environment have changed tremendously. This evolution will be observed in the first chapter when dealing with the literary and philosophical genealogy of the whole creator-creature relationship; starting of course with the *Genesis* in order to observe the relation between God, Adam and Eve, as well as Satan. Evidently, nature features heavily in *Genesis*, therefore the place accorded to animals, and the environment in general will be reviewed. After that I will show how these connections operate once put in a work of literature - in this instance, *Paradise Lost* by John Milton. The point of this exercise will not be to offer another analysis of an already famous poem but to focus on the characters' interactions.

Once having covered two periods of History, namely Classical Christianity and the Renaissance, I will turn to Romanticism and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Here of course the creator versus creature dynamic is obvious to all but the setting of the novel will also be considered. Next, for Modernism, I will use the film *Metropolis* in which machines and urbanism at large seem to take a very oppressive role; whereas Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot* takes on the postmodern vision by bringing androids that challenge the human self-perception. Asimov's work as well as Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* will influence many science-fiction films that will chose to reinterpret the robot-human relationship in a world often threatened by climate change. *Blade Runner* is therefore an obvious choice for its adaptation of Dick's work. It is also a work of importance as it, arguably, presents for the first time an android protagonist. This is a move that will be taken on board in *Bicentennial Man* and *Artificial Intelligence*, two films that take on the difficult task of debating the possibility of love relations between humans and their creations. Finally, *I, Robot*, directed by Alex Proyas, presents the first free robot.

All these works aforementioned contain some dialogue with the environment, be it passive or more active and obvious. Ecocriticism thus appears as the obvious choice and a useful analytical tool in order to tackle all environmental questions. Ecocriticism is a recent critical field. A summary of the history of the movement as well as its objectives might therefore be useful.

Whilst it is generally believed that modern environmentalism began with Rachael Carson's *Silent Spring* and more specifically "A Fable of Tomorrow," academically, Ecocriticism as such began in the nineties with the foundation of ASLE (the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment) during a conference in Nevada in 1992 with Scott Slovic, Cheryll Glotelty, and Mike Branch as the main members and founders. A year later, in 1993, the ISLE (Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment) journal was created. It became the official journal of the ASLE and publishes scholarly articles, short stories, literary essays and poems.

But what is Ecocriticism exactly? In *Ecocriticism*, Greg Garrard offers several definitions of this new literary theory. He quotes Cheryll Glotfelty in The Ecocriticism Reader who writes:

> What… is ecocriticism? Simply put, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender-conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production

> and economic class to its reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies (qtd. in Garrard 3).

Here, Glotfelty expresses the political aspect of Ecocriticism by the means of a comparison to Marxism and Gender criticism. She also indicates its wide range when indicating that "ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (qtd. in Garrard 3). Indeed, this sentence keeps the door open for several types of applications and analyses in the field of literature.

The second definition given by Garrard is from Writing the Environment in which Richard Kerrige describes the Ecocritic as someone who:

> wants to track environmental ideas and representations wherever they appear, to see more clearly a debate which seems to be taking place, often part-concealed, in a great many cultural spaces. Most of all, ecocriticism seeks to evaluate texts and ideas in terms of their coherence and usefulness as responses to environmental crisis (qtd. in Garrard 4).

Kerrige, by speaking of "environmental ideas" and "cultural spaces" opens the scope of Ecocriticism even more than Glotfelty had done in her definition. Here, Ecocriticism is not restricted to literature anymore and can expend towards other fields such as film for example.

However, in the second part of his definition, Kerrige states that the material being analyzed must be judged in terms of its "usefulness" and "coherence" in the face of "environmental crisis." I must say I disagree with several elements of this statement. The first problem is that I do not really see what is the exact meaning behind the expression "environmental crisis"? Is Kerrige talking about global warming, human interference, pollution? If he is talking about pollution, what kind of pollution? If he is talking about human interference, then what type of human interference is he thinking of? My issue with the term "environmental crisis" is that since the beginning of Humanity, people have been interfering with Nature. And Nature itself is changeable and changing. It went through numerous Ice Ages, the formation of Continents … change is part of Nature. So, my question here is: what exactly is an environmental crisis? How do we measure it? Evidently, it could be argued that this is only a detail, a vagueness of terminology that can quickly be rectified by exemplifying the term "environmental crisis."

Nevertheless, I still have an issue with the first part of the sentence which mentions assessing a text or an idea in terms of its "usefulness" and "coherence." If one had to take into account only the material that directly challenges environmental issues and gives answers to those, it would seriously restrict the range of study available. Indeed, this evaluative method would limit the number of primary literature and documents to recent works, therefore completely excluding older sources. This would not allow us to compare works from different periods. Moreover, I am afraid that, here, Kerrige treads a little too close to the field of science. Indeed, it is important to make the distinction between the two subjects.

This is a question that has been successfully negotiated by John Passmore. He proposes the term "Problems in ecology" in order to define scientific issues that have to be answered by the use of testing, formulas and observation. Whereas "ecological problems" are "features of our society, arising out of our dealings with nature, from which we should like to free ourselves, and which we do not regard as inevitable consequences of what is good in our society" (qtd. in Garrard 6). To illustrate this, an Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico is a problem in ecology that has to be resolved (or attempted to be resolved) by using scientific methods.

But when it becomes the News and makes the cover of newspapers, as soon as it is written about in books, it becomes an ecological problem, it becomes part of culture. Meanwhile, whilst writing about such an issue, an author, or film director might develop an answer to such an ecological issue. But I would view such an event more as a bonus, rather than a mandatory step towards an ecologically acceptable work according to Kerrige's definition.

In comparison, Garrard's definition is a lot more inclusive as well as closer to Glotfelty's (although, unlike Glotfelty, Garrard does not limit his definition to the literary field.) He describes Ecocriticism as "[…] the study of the relationship of the human and the non-human, throughout human cultural history and entailing critical analysis of the term 'human' itself" (Garrard 5). Garrard leaves the door of History wide open, thus allowing the analysis of ancient works. This is of importance, because as Lawrence Buell indicated in "The Emergence of Environmental Criticism," the opening chapter of *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination:* "[…] if environmental criticism today is still an emergent discourse it is one with very ancient roots" (2). Indeed, as Buell reminds us:

> Humankind's earliest stories are of earth's creation, of its transformation by gods or by human ingenuity's […] tales that frame environmental ethics in varied ways. In at least one case they may have significantly influenced the course of world history. The opening chapters of Genesis, the first book in Hebrew and Christian scripture has been blamed as the root cause of western technodominationism […] (2).

I will develop this debate on the influence of *Genesis* in the first chapter. Yet, the question of the originality and novelty of Ecocriticism is an interesting argument that is worth putting forward in this introduction. It could indeed be argued that Ecocriticism did not invent anything new. Nature and settings have always been present in literature, as it has been demonstrated above when talking about *Genesis*. However, although the environment has been present in literature and culture for many years, it has been neglected in the academic field. Buell himself remembers his school years when "setting" was a box that could be ticked by making a few statements about the location to then turn to the more "interesting" elements from the grid: "plot", "character" and "theme."

Yet, why has the environment recently been given a larger place in the world of academia? According to Buell, the reason is that "during the last third of the twentieth century "the environment" became front-page news" (4). The fear of an imminent end brought on by Humanity itself has been haunting the media for many years (albeit one occasionally upstaged by the war on terror and the economic crisis). An increasingly fragmented world has become a feature of everyday life. This divided world narrative could be said to be the reflection of the postmodern era in which we live. Postmodernism is thus a theory I will use when analyzing more recent works such as *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* for example. Postmodernism is a complex theory that is difficult to summarize. Therefore, I will divide this part of the introduction into subchapters that will develop the three main characteristics of postmodernism. Namely, the blurring of reality and fiction, the disappearance of differences between high and low culture and the vanishing of a metanarrative. But before delving into the theory as such, I am going to present a brief history of postmodernism.

As Jeremy Hawthorn and Ihab Hassan wrote, the term "postmodernism" was first used in the 1870s by John Watkins Chapman, a British artist (Hawthorn 215; Hassan, *From*

Postmodernism 6) and by Rudolf Pannwitz in 1917 (Hawthorn 215). Therefore, the original occurrence of the term dates back to the 1870s and not, as Hassan primarily believed to 1934, at which time the term "postmodernismo" was used in Frederico Onis's *Antología de la Poesía Española e Hispanoamericana* (Hassan, *Toward* 587). Yet, and this is what is important to remember, "postmodernism" only acquired its academic meaning in the 1960s.

Postmodernism, as its name indicates is the successor of modernism. As a new king sitting on the throne after his father's death, postmodernism keeps on building on some of the walls erected during the preceding reign but also knocks some out and passes new laws. The word *postmodernism*, as Hawthorn writes can be used in numerous ways:

> (i) to refer to the non-realist and non-traditional literature and art of the post-Second World War period; (ii) to refer to literature and art which takes certain modernist characteristics to an extreme stage; and (iii) to refer to aspects of a more general human condition in the 'late capitalist' world of the post-1950s which have an all-embracing effect on life, culture, ideology, and art, as well as (in some usage) to a generally more welcoming attitude towards these aspects (216).

It is the third aspect mentioned in Hawthorn's quote which is of real importance in this thesis. And in the part that follows I will attempt to define the three elements I have mentioned before and which are consequences of the influence of late capitalism as expressed by Hawthorn.

The corrosion of the distinction between high and low culture is the first elements I will approach. In *Discover Postmodernism*, Glenn Ward describes this blurring of hierarchy as a clear blow against modernist elitism. What is being indicated is that all aspects of culture are equal. And indeed, this can be observed in our daily life: museums are full of people from different backgrounds, television shows can be of better quality than feature films and experimental works of art find themselves exposed in galleries. On a more academic level, what this also implies is a widening of material available for analysis. Works that were before avoided because too popular and not sophisticated enough have been transformed into the new playground of the literary and cultural analysis. This is, of course, an opportunity that I am seizing as well and using in this thesis.

Indeed, I am going to analyze a lot of works of science fiction, a genre that was previously neglected by the academia but which will allow me to focus on issues of human/machine interactions. As Geyh, Leebron and Levy asserted, "[t]he figure of the cyborg, for instance – human/machine, human/animal, and human/alien hybrids – has allowed authors to explore the impact of bio- and computer technologies. At the same time, the cyborg functions as a way to investigate gender, race, and ethnic hybridities" (xviii). In other words, cyborgs can be used in order to reflect on the influence of technologies, but also to consider the meaning of the human. If a book or a film presents a creature that is apparently similar to a human being, it forces one to question the idea of the human as inherently distinct and unique.

The second distinctive feature of postmodernism can sometimes be seen in science fiction as well, i.e. the blurring of the boundaries between reality and fiction. Jean Baudrillard famously expressed this when describing "the dissolution of TV into life, the dissolution of life into TV" (qtd. in Ward 12) - thus expressing the fact that the representation can be more real than the model. He called those copies without originals "simulacra."

Glenn Ward affirms that one of the features of postmodernism is a "fascination for how our lives seem increasingly dominated by visual media" (8), which appears to confirm what has been mentioned above. Television, or visual media in general, are indeed good examples of how fiction has become very close to reality, or even more real than reality itself.

Another point that Glenn Ward makes about postmodernism is that it brings "a questioning of ideas about meaning and communication" (8). According to postmodernists, meaning is not anymore the property of the author, only interpretations remain. This is an element, as Hawthorn indicates, that the postmodernists adopted from the modernists. Yet, contrarily to the modernists, the postmodernists decided to embrace the fall of meaning and to celebrate it. Or, in Hawthorn's words: "if one cannot prevent Rome burning then one might as well enjoy the fiddling that is left open to one" (216).

This goes toward the last main characteristic of postmodernism which is the disappearance of a metanarrative. The "disappearance of a metanarrative" does not mean that there is no metanarrative anymore, but that there is not one main narrative prevailing over any other. This can be seen in literature and culture as meaning and representation start to be challenged.

"Language and representation are no longer said to reflect or express reality; there are no truths, only interpretations" (Ward 12), says Glenn Ward. What is meant here is not that fiction cannot appear to be real, because that would go against what had been said previously, but that it is not possible to present a chunk of reality using words or images and expect the result to be understood in the same way by everyone. The author is no longer the source of meaning. This role is relegated to language and to the viewers or readers. As Glenn Ward puts it: "'Meanings happen between audiences and freely circulating signs, and are not produced by a reality that exists prior to its representation" (12). Or, to say it differently, postmodernism does not consider that it is possible to capture reality and present it directly and wholly to an audience or a reader. Interpretation is always part of the game and is always multiple (8). Here Hawthorn would add that in general, postmodernism is defined by an embracing of the modern world - more specifically, the hybridization, "the dominance of commercial pressures, and of human powerlessness in the face of a blind technology, is not disputed" (217). Or as Jean-François Lyotard describes it:

The development of techno-sciences has become a means of increasing disease, not of fighting it. We can no longer call this development by the old name of progress. This development seems to be taking place by itself, by an autonomous force or 'motricity.' It doesn't respond to a demand coming from human needs. On the contrary, human entities (individual or social) seem always to be destabilized by the results of this development. The intellectual results as much as the material ones.

> If the postmodernist does not worry about knowing the world as much as the modernist, critic Brian McHale affirms that postmodernism focuses on ontological questions such as: what is identity? How is the self influenced or created by culture? (Geyh, Leebron, Levy xviii).

The self is fragmented, "[t]his 'posthumanist' approach variously presents identity as: hybrid, cyborg-like, fluid, nomadic, in a permanent state of 'becoming,' or performative and masquerade-like (Ward 13). For the postmodernists, identity is a process, with no search for authenticity (contrarily to the existentialists). However, this is not necessarily negative.

Indeed, if identity is an ever-changing process, it cannot be ruled by the dominant, patriarchal categories that are gender, nationality, ethnicity and sexuality.

1. Chapter One: Literary and Philosophical Genealogy

1.1. *Genesis*[1]

In the introduction, it was stated that the Genesis was often taken as the source of Western society's disrespect for the environment. I quoted Buell who introduces this debate in which one side argues that God, by giving Earth and all its creatures to Adam, influenced Man's greediness in its use of natural resources in comparison to other cultures. The other side claims that this is a misreading of the Biblical text and that what is actually meant is that Adam was given the land in order to be its keeper and cultivate it (Buell 2). My aim will not be to argue for or against any of those claims but rather to observe where they lie and how they compare. Moreover, I will keep in focus another interesting element of this work which is the creator/creature relation. But before delving into the more complex parts of the book, I shall briefly retell the first three chapters as I go along. The first chapter of the Genesis recounts the Creation in six days.

On the first day God creates Heaven and Earth as well as light and darkness which he calls respectively "Day" and "Night". On the second day, God separated the sky from the Earth. Or, as it is said in the Bible: "the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament" (Rev Std Ver; Genesis 1:8). The image "water," is used both for the earth and the sky, which, incidentally, God calls "Heaven." After, on the third day, God brings together the waters, which he calls "Seas" in order to bring to the surface the dry land which he calls "Earth." On Earth he decides to make vegetation grow, all different kind of plants and fruit bearing trees. Then, on the fourth day, God makes the stars, the Sun and the Moon in order to provide light, directions and seasons. On the fifth day, God creates the birds and the sea animals and blesses them by saying "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth" (1:22). On the sixth day, God creates land animals and then decides to make man and to make it male and female. He says:

> "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth" (1:26).

He also tells the humans: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth" (1:28). He then adds:

> Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and

[1] I have read three different versions of *Genesis* in three different Bibles (the New International version, King James version and the Revised Standard version), compared them and searched for any major differences in meaning. I have not found any, and will therefore use the Revised Standard Version for quotations in order to remain consistent and clear.

> to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food (1:29-31).

The last few quotes from God would tend to favour the opinion that *Genesis*, the text, influenced Jews and Christians into seeing themselves as the rightful heirs of God and the masters of the earth and of every plant and animal that dwelt on it. I would like to note that in this version of *Genesis*, God gives plants and fruits for food and dominion over the living things. Does this imply that only plants are given to man for consumption? Moreover, God also gives "every green plant" to the beasts. Therefore, at this stage of the creation at least, it would seem that humanity was destined to be vegetarian and to share its food with the other beasts of the world. Maybe it could also be interpreted that "dominion" over the animals means that people could do whatever they wanted with them, including eating them. However, determining this is not the aim of this thesis. All I want to do at this point is to balance and contrast these two different approaches.

Another aspect that might be worth exploring is the systematic repetition of the expression "and God saw that it was good" after the apparition of a new element in the world. This sign of approval follows most of God's creation. It is present for the light, but not for the darkness, thus apparently indicating God's preference for the light. It is also repeated just after the creation of the Seas, the Earth, the vegetation, the firmament (including the sun and the moon), sea and land animals, as well as the birds. Yet, there is no mention of God's approval immediately after humankind's creation. It is only a few sentences later that God reaffirms his satisfaction with "everything" he has done but mankind in particular is not mentioned. Perhaps this could be interpreted as the possibility of evil and corruption in humans, the kind of corruption that is written about in the second chapter of *Genesis.*

The second chapter begins with the seventh day; the day God rested after all his work. It then seems to go into an analepsis which recounts in more details the creation of Adam. We are brought back to the creation of heaven and earth. It is said that:

> no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up--for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground (2:5).

It is interesting to see here that man is mentioned as a crucial ingredient in the growing of plants, in equal measure to water. This would of course go toward the theory that man was given the earth in order to take care of it. After that we are told that a "mist" covered the surface of the ground and God created man from dust, then blew onto it and brought life to man.

God plants Eden with beautiful and edible plants amongst which the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river is also created so as to provide water for the vegetation. Then Adam is brought into the garden to "till it and keep it" (2:15). Again, this supports the second theory on mankind's dominion over the earth. God also tells Adam that he can eat of every tree in the garden, except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because if he does he will die. God says: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (2:18). So God forms land animals and birds out of the ground and brings them to Adam so that he can give them names.

Yet, Adam feels lonely and no animal can fill that void or, as it is written in the Bible, "but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him" (2:20). Therefore God makes Adam

fall asleep and takes one of his ribs from which he creates a woman whom he brings to man. Adam calls her “Woman” and they both stand naked without any feeling of shame.

This part of *Genesis* could very well be compared to the stage of childhood, when the innocent child discovers the world around him/her. It also shows humankind in a peaceful environment and in harmony with nature, its surroundings and with animals, as does *Genesis 1* which shows a sharing of food between animals and humankind. At the same time, God’s gift to mankind of the plants and the animals underlines man’s dominion over all the other creations of God putting him above everything except God. I use the masculine pronoun because, as will become obvious in the third chapter of *Genesis*, Woman comes second after Adam, not only in the creation but also in this hierarchy I just mentioned.

The third part is initiated by the temptation of the woman by the serpent. The serpent asks Woman if God forbad them to eat from any tree of the garden. The woman answers that they can eat all the fruits of all the trees in the garden, except for the tree of the knowledge, which they cannot even touch lest they will die. To this, the serpent replies: "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (2:4-5). This is a very interesting part of the Book of *Genesis,* and a recurrent theme throughout most of the works I have analyzed. Indeed, the need to become the equal of the master or creator is found in many other works and I will come back to this key issue later in the thesis.

Convinced by the serpent, Woman takes the fruit and eats it. She then gives some of it to Adam. The fruit opens their eyes, and makes them conscious of their nudity. This can be interpreted as the first steps into puberty and the recognition of the body as well as the sense of shame, awkwardness and discomfort that comes with it. Therefore, to alleviate the embarrassment of their naked bodies, they use fig leaves to cover themselves. When God arrives in the garden, Adam and Woman hide behind trees when God calls Adam who says that he is hiding because he is naked. God then asks if he has been eating from the tree of knowledge, and Adam answers that the woman gave him the fruit. So God asks the woman who says that the serpent tricked her into eating the fruit.

This moment shows again the childlike nature of this man and woman who blame others for their mistake. Yet, God’s response to the disobedience of Adam and Woman is far from childlike. He condemns the snake to crawl on his belly and to eat dust for the rest of times. Also the descendants of the woman and the descendants of the snake will be enemies. To the woman God says: “I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you” (2:16). Here what has been said about the woman’s position is reinforced, she is definitely seen as second after her husband. Finally, to Adam God says:

> Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return (2:17-19).

To Adam, God exposes the difficulties of the life to come. He will have to work hard in order to eat. Moreover, Adam is made aware of his new mortality. It can be observed that Adam’s punishment will also be shared by Eve and all the other creatures that will have to

fight for survival and eventually die. Therefore, the fairness of God's punishment can be doubted as the entire creation is to be punished for a crime committed by only three creatures (the serpent, Adam and Eve).

After, Adam calls his wife "Eve" and God gives them clothing made out of skin, a kind gesture before what is to come. It is also something that I found in some other of the works in which the clothes are a symbol of freedom and humanity. Then God proclaims that man is now one of them, thus recognizing humankind's newly acquired superiority. But, God does not seem to want humankind to become its complete equal, therefore he send Adam and Eve away from the garden of Eden to make sure that they will not have access to the tree of life and become immortal. Moreover, to be absolutely certain that no one will ever come back, God places cherubim (angels) at the entry of the garden with a sword that turns in every direction. The creatures therefore cannot equal their creator completely, but only try to emulate and when doing so, they are punished instead of being compensated. The reason for the interdiction is never given, apart from the fact that it will cause death.

1.2. *Paradise Lost*

Genesis played a role as a metanarrative for centuries and its influence can be felt in many of the works that will follow, especially in John Milton's *Paradise Lost* which develops the first three chapters of *Genesis* that have just been analysed. John Milton chose to retell a story all his contemporaries knew but also risked deviating from, and expanding on, the Christian history by writing a poem in twelve books. Milton's work is dense and complex: a whole thesis could probably be written on this poem only. That is why, for the purpose of this thesis, I am going to take a new methodology in this chapter. I will give a very skeleton-like summary and then, in my analysis, I will use some extracts from the poem where necessary.

In *Paradise Lost: A Student's Companion to the Poem,* Francis Blessington gives a very well summarized comparison of Milton's poem in comparison to the classical story. Beginning with the Christian history, the succession of events is as follows:

> The War in Heaven
>
> The Creation of Our Universe
>
> Adam and Eve in Paradise
>
> The Temptation and Fall of Man
>
> The Aftermath of the Fall: Human History[2]

Now contrasting this to Blessington's summary of the plot (Blessington gave numbers that refer to the books):

> I.–II. Poem begins with after Satan's army is defeated. Council in hell.
>
> III. Council in Heaven. The Father and the Son react to Satan's resolution to take revenge on man. Son offers His life for man.
>
> IV. Adam and Eve in Eden, including a flashback to Eve's creation.
>
> V.—VI. The Angel Raphael tells Adam the story of the War in Heaven (flashback).

[2] (Blessington, 26)

VII. Raphael tells the story of the creation of the universe (flashback).

VIII. Adam recounts his creation (flashback).

IX. Temptation and Fall.

X. Aftermath of the Fall on Earth and in Hell.

XI.—XII. Michael reveals to Adam the future course of biblical history (flashforward).[3]

Here it appears clear that Milton played with the structure of the classical Christian story using analepses and prolepses. This probably helped him bring a new density to the story but also gave him the opportunity to concentrate on certain aspects.

I will in turn focus on the same elements that have been mentioned in the previous part on *Genesis,* i.e. the characters. Those characters are going to be Satan, who did not appear as such in *Genesis,* Adam, Eve, and Eden which in my opinion can be seen as a character on the same level as the living-breathing humanlike creatures, and finally God himself (although he will be observed more in terms of his relation to the characters).

As Satan is one of the first characters to appear in the story, I am going to start the chapter with him. In many aspects he is similar to Adam and Eve. He was also created by God and, he too, disobeyed his creator. Milton's Satan is a very complex as well as attractive character for twentieth-century readers. This is something Blessington, John Carey and Thomas Corns agree on. Satan rebels against God because he does not accept the Son as his superior. In the fifth book, Milton presents God's speech to the angels:

Hear all ye Angels, Progenie of Light,
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers,
Hear my Decree, which unrevok't shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My onely Son, and on this holy Hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your Head I him appoint;
And by my Self have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heav'n, and shall confess him Lord:
Under his great Vice-gerent Reign abide
United as one individual Soule
For ever happie: him who disobeyes
Mee disobeyes, breaks union, and that day
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep ingulft, his place
Ordaind without redemption, without end. (Milton, 5.600-615)

[3] (Blessington, 26)

Here we clearly understand that the angels have been warned against any type of disobedience. Yet, Satan is too proud to accept the new position in which he is placed and decides to rebel, even though he is aware that he will be punished for it.

Yet, Satan is not prepared to fall alone and he tries to convince the other angels to follow him. He partly reaches his goal by using his powers of persuasion:

> Who can in reason then or right assume
> Monarchie over such as live by right
> His equals, if in power and splendor less,
> In freedome equal? or can introduce
> Law and Edict on us, who without law
> Erre not, much less for this to be our Lord,
> And look for adoration to th' abuse
> Of those Imperial Titles which assert
> Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve? (794-802).

Therefore up until book five, Satan can be seen as quite a romantic figure. As Corns highlights, Satan "shows courage and leadership under the most difficult circumstances. He faces Death; he crosses alone the challenging Gulf of Chaos; he offers battle to Ithuriel and Zephron and their squad of angels" (Corns, 52). His exploits seem great and in the first book, Satan recounts the battle against the forces of God:

> Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd
> That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
> His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd
> In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n,
> And shook his throne (1.101-105).

However, gradually the mask start to crack and the reader realizes that many elements that constitute the image of Satan have been put forward by Satan himself. In book six, when the battle is told by Raphael, we understand that Satan did not shake God's throne but was struck by Abidiel, an Angel of lesser power, and his whole army was defeated by the Son himself. At this point Satan could have recognized the Son's true power. But as Gabriel shows in the fourth book, there is something hypocritical about Satan's rebellion against the son[4]:

> And thou sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
> Patron of liberty, who more then thou
> Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilly ador'd
> Heav'ns awful Monarch? wherefore but in hope
> To dispossess him, and thy self to reigne? (4.957-961)

Here we understand that the motives behind Satan's rebellion are far from pure. He does not only suffer from too much pride, he is hungry for power and wants to take over Heaven.

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[4] (Blessington, 34)

The last element that really brings the mask down is Satan's decision to take revenge on God by attempting to take Adam and Eve along in his fall. There is certainly something very disturbing about the fact of taking on weaker creatures than himself. As Carey shows, when Satan first approaches Adam and Eve, after having made his way towards Eden, he cannot prevent himself from feeling that he could love them. He describes them as:

> Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
> Not Spirits, yet to heav'nly Spirits bright
> Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
> With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
> In them Divine resemblance, and such grace
> The hand that formd them on their shape hath poured (4. 360-365).

However, he chooses at that point to keep on his path of revenge, even though he could have walked away and later he argues:

> And should I at your harmless innocence
> Melt, as I doe, yet public reason just,
> Honour and Empire with revenge enlarg'd,
> By conquering this new World, compels me now
> To do what else though damnd I should abhorre (4.388-392).

By deciding to take humanity in his fall, Satan seals his destiny. As we will see with Adam and Eve later, Milton's protagonists have complete freedom of choice, which adds to the complexity of their character.

It is during Satan's first approach into Eden in book four that we are given a description of what seems to be an enchanting place:

> Yet higher then their tops
> The verdurous wall of paradise up sprung:
> Which to our general Sire gave prospect large
> Into his neather Empire neighbouring round.
> And higher then that Wall a circling row
> Of goodliest Trees loaden with fairest Fruit,
> Blossoms and Fruits at once of golden hue
> Appeerd, with gay enameld colours mixt:
> On which the Sun more glad impress'd his beams
> Then in fair Evening Cloud, or humid Bow,
> When God hath showrd the earth; so lovely seemd
> That Lantskip […] (4.142-152).

I would like to highlight the fact that this is Satan's observation. It would be in his advantage to minimize the beauty and abundance of the garden, yet he cannot seem to be able to contain his enthusiasm. A later description given by the narrator only enhances this vision of Eden as

a heavenly place (see 4.208-268), a place where humans are in perfect accordance with their environment.

However it could be said that although Eden has the appearance of Paradise, the life it provides is not all rest and contemplation. Indeed, as George Kirkpatrick Hunter notes in *Paradise Lost,* Adam and Eve have to work as the gardeners and keepers of Eden. This is understood when Adam explains to Eve:

> Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest
> Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
> Labour and rest, as day and night to men
> Successive, and the timely dew of sleep
> Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines
> Our eye-lids; other Creatures all day long
> Rove idle unimploid, and less need rest;
> Man hath his daily work of body or mind
> Appointed, which declares his Dignitie,
> And the regard of Heav'n on all his waies;
> While other Animals unactive range,
> And of their doings God takes no account. (Milton, 4.611-622)

As Hunter points out, the work is imposed on Adam and Eve from the outside. God is the one who has instructed them to take care of the garden he made for them. Yet, it appears that this work is not to be understood as labour but more as recreation. In book nine, Eve describes it as a "pleasant task" (9.207), whilst later Adam argues that God did not make them for "irksome toil, but to delight" (9.242). This is of course to be compared with the difficult work that is to come after the Fall, when mankind will have to labour hard in order to eat.

The easy life that Adam and Eve were leading is soon going to end as Satan makes his way towards Eve. But before focusing on the Fall as such, I will go back to Adam and Eve's creation. Eve's creation came from Adam's desire for a companion. In the fourth book, Eve remembers the moment of her creation, when she woke feeling rested and saw her reflection in the water. She felt attracted to her own reflection mistaking it for another human being. An angel appeared in order to steer her away from indulging too much into this narcissistic path and told her that she was going to be the mother of the human race. She met Adam who told her that she was his flesh and bone. He then proceeds to explain to her how she was created and what she represents to him:

> […] to give thee being I lent
> Out of my side to thee, neerest my heart
> Substantial Life, to have thee by my side
> Henceforth an individual solace dear;
> Part of my Soul I seek thee, and thee claim
> My other half: with that thy gentle hand
> Seisd mine, I yielded, and from that time see

How beauty is excelld by manly grace

And wisdom, which alone is truly fair (4.483-491)

Adam's attachment to Eve helps to explain the Fall and his choice in eating the apple. He cannot face being alone, being without her.

As in *Genesis,* God creates Adam out of dust. But Milton also offers us Adam's memory of his arrival into Eden:

Soft on the flourie herb I found me laid

In Balmie Sweat, which with his Beames the Sun

Soon dri'd, and on the reaking moisture fed.

Strait toward Heav'n my wondring Eyes I turnd,

And gaz'd a while the ample Skie, till rais'd

By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,

As thitherward endevoring, and upright

Stood on my feet (8.254-261).

Adam quickly stands up and starts to explore his environment. He also can speak and immediately names all the creatures he sees around him, everything that is part of his environment. As he keeps on walking into the garden, Adam finds God and falls in awe of his creator. God offers him the garden which he will have to "till and keep," and tells him that he can eat the fruits of all trees except the one from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and that if he disobeys this order he shall die.

Although the warning is well established, however, it will not be sufficient. The angels warn Adam and Eve a second time that Satan is trying to come to hurt them and that they must be careful. On the morning of the Fall, Eve and Adam argue a long time because Eve wants to go work on her own as she argues that if they separate they will be more efficient. Adam in turn reminds her of the danger, yet in vain as Eve feels that Adam doubts her strength. She wants to prove her worth and show him that she can confront the devil alone.

We know of course that she will fail and after eating the apple she debates whether or not to share the apple with Adam. She arrives to the conclusion that she wants to be with him. When she goes to meet Adam with the apple he cannot face the fact of losing her and decides to eat as well in order to stay with her even in death:

How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost,

Defac't, deflourd, and now to Death devote?

Rather how hast thou yeelded to transgress

The strict forbiddance, how to violate

The sacred Fruit forbidd'n! som cursed fraud

Of Enemie hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,

And mee with thee hath ruind, for with thee

Certain my resolution is to Die;

How can I live without thee, how forgoe

> Thy sweet Converse and Love so dearly joyn'd,
>
> To live again in these wilde Woods forlorn? (Book 9; 900-910)

Three of God's creatures therefore decide to turn away from him and to disobey him. However they do not fall in the same manner. Satan, although he knows he is wrong, decides that he will keep on the path he resolved himself to take having been lost by his pride and greediness. Eve has been cheated into believing a lie because she wanted to prove she was worth as much as Adam and that she was not the weaker of the two. Finally, Adam was lost because instead of turning towards God he decided to follow Eve. His only crime appears to be to love a fellow human being more than his creator.

God will be strict in his punishment, however it will be mitigated by the Son who offers his life for Adam and Eve, and by the Angels who will escort them out of Eden, offer them clothes and reveal to Adam what the future of his children will be. He is far more merciful with the first humans than he has been with Satan. He is also more caring with Adam and Eve than some other creators have been with their creatures.

1.3. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and the Shadow of *Paradise Lost*

Paradise Lost is a recurrent theme in *Frankenstein*. Already in the preface, written by Percy Shelley and signed by Mary Shelley, Milton's poem is mentioned by the author who claims that:

> [She has] thus endeavoured to preserve the truth of the elementary principles of human nature, while [she has] not scrupled to innovate upon their combinations. The *Iliad,* the tragic poetry of Greece-- Shakespeare, in the *Tempest* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* --and most especially Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, conform to this rule […]

The influence of Paradise Lost is therefore declared from the beginning and the intertextual references could almost be described as postmodern. Indeed, nods to the poem can be found in different parts of the book. The first I found was in the "letters," the first part of the book which contains correspondences from Captain Walton to his sister. In one of the letters, Walton mentions being in the city of "Archangel" in which he stopped. This could be interpreted as a warning for what is to come. In the novel itself, there are repetitions of several words such as "daemon," "evil" or "devil," which are usually used to describe the monster. The word "creature" as such, appears in almost every chapter and is used indiscriminately for several characters of the novel.

The last letter contains mainly the rendition of Frankenstein's dialogue to Walton after the Captain rescues Frankenstein. A part of this discourse is particularly interesting in this case. Frankenstein tells Walton:

> I have determined at one time that the memory of these **evils** should die with me, but you have won me to alter my determination. You seek for knowledge and wisdom, as I once did; and **I ardently hope that the gratification of your wishes may not be a serpent to sting you, as mine has been** (my emphasis, Shelley, 28).

Here we have references to evils, but more importantly to the serpent who can be seen as a metaphor for Frankenstein's ambitions which came back to bite him. In the same way that

Eve was punished for wanting to acquire more knowledge and come closer to God. Frankenstein could thus be said to compare himself to Eve.

Frankenstein can be paralleled to other creatures from *Genesis* and *Paradise Lost*. In the last part of the book, Walton describes Frankenstein in these words:

> What a glorious creature must he have been in the days of his prosperity, when he is thus noble and godlike in ruin! He seems to feel his own worth and the greatness of his fall (Shelley, 203).

The fall and the reference to past better times can be assimilated to both Adam and Satan who suffered a fall. Yet, it can be argued that the description of him as 'godlike' might be more appropriate for Satan who was a powerful angel and therefore more like a god. However, it could also be said that Adam was created in God's image and therefore very much "God-like".

In another part of "Walton," the book's closing chapter, Frankenstein likens himself to Satan:

> All my speculations and hopes are as nothing, and like the archangel who aspired to omnipotence, I am chained in an eternal hell. My imagination was vivid, yet my powers of analysis and application were intense; by the union of these qualities I conceived the idea and executed the creation of man (Shelley, 204).

The comparison to Satan is understandable considering the "fall" he suffered, the loss of his family and friends (who can be compared to Satan's fellow rebel angels) and also the search for "omnipotence" is reminiscent of Satan. At the same time, it can be argued that by creating another living being, Frankenstein can be related to God himself. Because, it can be debated that, after all, becoming God is what Victor Frankenstein attempted. And in the next part, due to the creator-creature relationship, Frankenstein seems to take on the role of God.

Milton's work is mentioned directly another time in chapter fifteen when the Creature meets his creator again and recounts his finding of three books in the woods: a volume of Plutarch's *Lives*, the *Sorrows of Werter* and *Paradise Lost.* The Creature proceeds to describe the discoveries he made when reading the books; what he learned and took from those works as well as his feeling of empathy for certain characters and, out of the three, the book that made the biggest impression on him is *Paradise Lost:*

> But "Paradise Lost" excited different and far deeper emotions. I read it, as I had read the other volumes which had fallen into my hands, as a true history. It moved every feeling of wonder and awe that the picture of an omnipotent God warring with his creatures was capable of exciting. I often referred the several situations, as their similarity struck me, to my own. Like Adam, I was apparently united by no link to any other being in existence; but his state was far different from mine in every other respect. He had come forth from the hands of God a perfect creature, happy and prosperous, guarded by the especial care of his Creator; he was allowed to converse with, and acquire knowledge from, beings of a superior nature: but I was wretched, helpless, and alone. **Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition; for often, like him, when I viewed the bliss of my protectors, the bitter gall of envy rose within me** (my emphasis; Shelley, 125).

The Creature therefore identifies with both Adam and Satan but admits being more attracted to the latter because of the similarities he finds between him and the fallen angel. One of those shared experiences is the feeling of envy the Monster senses when he observes the De Laceys, in the same way as Satan envied Adam and Eve. The Creature explains how these emotions where reinforced by the discovery of Frankenstein's journal in which he

details the different steps of the monster's creation. The Creature is shocked to discover he was assembled from different parts of dead bodies:

> "Hateful day when I received life!" I exclaimed in agony. "Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even *you* turned from me in disgust? God, in pity, made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image; but my form is a filthy type of yours, more horrid even from the very resemblance. Satan had his companions, fellow-devils, to admire and encourage him; but I am solitary and abhorred" (Shelley, 125-126).

The Monster completely rejects the way he was made and the sole fact that he exists causes him pain. He criticizes Victor Frankenstein's work, comparing it to God's more successful creation and he underlines how his fate is made worse by his loneliness.

Indeed, as he rightly indicates, he is one of a kind, a specimen without anyone to share his experiences with or to be of any company. As it has been shown before, Adam was also alone when God made him but God understood his loneliness and created Eve. The Monster will make the same request to Victor Frankenstein but to no avail. Having been horrified by his first creation, Frankenstein refuses to make a female creature fearing the arrival of a new generation of monsters that would oppress and hurt more people than the Monster already has. Additionally, he is scared that two creatures will bring double the destruction, and seeing what happened to his relatives it is difficult to point the finger at him. However, he could be blamed for the absence of care provided to the Creature. From the first moment of the Creature's existence, Frankenstein rejected him, horrified by his own creation, and only felt relief when he realized that the monster had left his apartment. God in contrast cared for Adam, provided him with company, food and sent angels to contribute to his education.

The Monster is given an occasion to voice his grievances in the tenth chapter which contains the second meeting between creation and creator. Frankenstein approaches the Monster with anger and murderous intention which are understandable given the fact that the Monster has killed his young brother and that an innocent was wrongly condemned and paid the price of her life for this murder. During his furious speech, the creator calls his Creature "devil" reinforcing even more the link to Satan. He then goes on to vent his anger and indignation to which the Creature replies:

> "I expected this reception," said the daemon. "All men hate the wretched; how, then, must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things! Yet you, my creator, detest and spurn me, thy creature, to whom thou art bound by ties only dissoluble by the annihilation of one of us." […] "**Remember, that I am thy creature; I ought to be thy Adam; but I am rather the fallen angel**, whom thou drivest from joy for no misdeed. Everywhere I see bliss, from which I alone am irrevocably excluded. I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend. Make me happy, and I shall again be virtuous" (my emphasis; Shelley, 95).

The Creature underlines how, contrarily to Satan and Adam, he was driven away without disobeying any order. The lack of care provided to the Creature by Frankenstein reflects badly on the creator. Frankenstein has often been likened to his Creature mainly because of the similarities in their speech but I would also argue that Frankenstein's lack of humanity, his selfishness in the face of the despair his creature showed at the time of his "birth" accounts for a lot of the Creatures evilness. It could therefore be said the Creature is a twisted mirror of Frankenstein. Because he was never given interdictions or education it is difficult to put on the Creature's shoulders the whole responsibility of the crimes he committed and this is what he will go on to explain. The Creature owes his survival and education to himself only. He

explains his descent into darkness to Walton: "Evil thenceforth became my good. Urged thus far, I had no choice but to adapt my nature to an element which I had willingly chosen" (Shelley, 212).

He blames himself, however, for the crimes he has committed and once again compares himself to Satan:

> But now crime has degraded me beneath the meanest animal. No guilt, no mischief, no malignity, no misery, can be found comparable to mine […] I cannot believe that I am the same creature whose thoughts were once filled with sublime and transcendent visions of the beauty and the majesty of goodness. But it is even so; the fallen angel becomes malignant devil. Yet even that enemy of God and man had friends and associates in his desolation; I am alone (Shelley, 213).

The Creature thus appears to understand the gravity of his acts. He nevertheless reminds Walton that he was not always that way, he became violent through his experiences with humankind and because of the loneliness that struck him.

Mary Shelley's tale could almost be called postmodern because of the way it brings changes to old metanarratives. It also introduces interesting questions and it will have a huge influence on the works that will follow. The first metanarrative that is being addressed is the creature-creator relationship.

Whereas before, in *Genesis* and *Paradise Lost* the creator was all-powerful in comparison to his creations, in *Frankenstein* the Creature is very much the one pulling the strings. Like Satan, the Creature rebels against his maker but unlike Satan, the Creature outlives Frankenstein. He hurts himself whilst hurting his creator as he will lose the only human being to whom he was linked, his only "parent" but he manages to take over his creator and to avenge himself. This is a first in the creator-creation relationship up until then and will lead the way for other works to come.

Whilst developing those new schemas *Frankenstein* asks pertinent questions: If one-day mankind succeeds in creating other human-like beings, what will be the use of these new being? What will their role be in our society? Who will care for them? Will they be allowed the same status as "natural" humans? These are interrogations that will be picked up by the generations of writers and screenwriters to come. Some as Jay Clayton indicates in "*Frankenstein*'s futurity: replicants and robots" will take those questions and the story itself as a warning against unruly scientific experiments:

As a cautionary tale, *Frankenstein* has had an illustrious career; virtually every catastrophe of the last two centuries […] has been symbolized by Shelley's monster. If Shelley's work is the first futuristic novel as some critics have claimed, then the genre of science fiction was inaugurated as a warning, not a promise, about the world of tomorrow. We will see in the works to come if this metanarrative held on and in which direction the next generation of writers decided to go.

The environment is another element that has been subjected to changes in the works observed. *Genesis* and *Paradise Lost* showed an idyllic world in which men and nature lived harmoniously. Then that paradise was taken out of the picture after the fall, and real hardship began, although nothing comparable to the grandiosity and implacable strength of the nature described in *Frankenstein.*

Two storms are described in Shelley's novel; the first one appears during Frankenstein's childhood:

> When I was about fifteen years old we had retired to our house near Belrive, when we witnessed a most violent and terrible thunderstorm. It advanced from behind the mountain of Jura, and the thunder burst at once with frightful loudness from various quarters of the heavens. I remained, while the storm lasted, watching its progress with curiosity and delight. As I stood at the door, on a sudden I beheld a stream of fire issue from an old and beautiful oak which stood about twenty yards from our house; and so soon as the dazzling light vanished, the oak has disappeared, and nothing remained but a blasted stump (Shelley, 39).

The second storm occurs after the Monster's creation and follows the death of Frankenstein's brother:

> I quitted my seat, and walked on, although the darkness and storm increased every minute, and the thunder burst with a terrific crash over my head. It was echoed from Salêve, the Juras, and the Alps of Savoy; vivid flashes of lightning dazzled my eyes, illuminating the lake, making it appear like a vast sheet of fire; then for an instant everything seemed of a pitchy darkness, until the storm recovered itself from the preceding flash. The storm, as is often the case in Switzerland, appeared at once in various parts of the heavens. The most violent storm hung exactly north of the town, over that part of the lake which lies between the promontory of Belrive and the village of Copêt. Another storm enlightened Jura with faint flashes; and another darkened and sometimes disclosed the Môle, a peaked mountain to the east of the lake (Shelley, 72-73).

It appears that the source for these apocalyptic descriptions of hostile environment came from real life experiences. It is well known that in June 1816 Mary Shelley sojourned in Switzerland, in a villa on the shore of Lake Geneva with Lord Byron, Percy Shelley and John Polidori. The event is told in the preface and in the author's introduction to the 1831 version. In the latter, Mary Shelley describes the summer as "wet" and "ungenial, the "incessant rain often confined [them] for days in the house" (Shelley, 6). Actually, this unusually cold and rainy summer was due to a volcanic eruption. The climatic event is described by the English ecocritic, Jonathan Bate:

> … the eruption of Tambora volcano in Indonesia in 1815 killed 80,000 people on the island of Sumbawa and Lomboc. It was the greatest eruption since 1500. The dust blasted into the stratosphere reduced the transparency of the atmosphere, filtered out the sun and consequently lowered surface temperatures. The effect lasted for three years straining the growth capacity of life across the planet. Beginning in 1816, crop failure led to food riots in nearly every country in Europe. Only in 1819 were there good harvests again (quoted in Bill Phillips).

It is on this piece of information that Bill Phillips bases his theory according to which the Monster is not, as previously believed, a reflection on the Industrial Revolution and the embodiment for the sufferings it will bring. Indeed, Phillips reminds us that Mary Shelley grew up in Scotland, in the countryside (as she indicates herself in the introduction to the novel), and she never made mention of the industrialisation in *Frankenstein* or in *History of a Six Weeks Tour* which she published in 1817, or even in her journals. Additionally, Phillips quotes David Thompson who in *Europe Since Napoleon* writes that "by 1815, only a relatively small proportion of all the industrial workers were engaged in large factories, and most Englishmen lived in little towns and villages" (qtd. in Phillips, 60).

Rather, Phillips puts the accent on the extraordinary weather that struck Europe during the period of *Frankenstein*'s writing and the link between the weather and the Creature. As Phillips indicates, the creature appears just after the second storm:

> A flash of lightning illuminated the object, and discovered its shape plainly to me; its gigantic stature, and the deformity of its aspect, more hideous that belongs to humanity, instantly informed me that it was the wretch, the filthy daemon, to whom I had given life (Shelley, 73).

Not only is the creature revealed by the storm, but he also does not seem perturbed by it in the least. He moves with ease and escalates the mountains faster than any human could.

Phillips adds that the creation of the Creature also required help from the environment, or at least from electricity. In the novel, the character of Frankenstein describes this crucial moment: "I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless that lay at my feet" (Shelley, 55). Electricity and science in general appear to have been often part of the conversations that occurred during the Swiss holiday. We know from the introduction to the novel that the main influence for the book came from a conversation between Byron and Percy Shelley during which they approached the subject of galvanism and how "[perhaps] a corpse would be reanimated; galvanism had given token of such things; perhaps the component parts of a creature might be manufactured, brought together, and endued with vital warmth" (Shelley, 8).

Nature, in the form of electricity, thus took part in the creation of the monster; the Monster could be seen as not only a product of science but also as a product of Nature itself. Indeed, he seems absolutely at ease in the most extreme conditions and he appears to be closer to Nature than Frankenstein has ever been. As shown above, the Creature moves with ease in dangerous terrains in the most difficult conditions. In the last chapter he even wrote to Frankenstein: "Follow me; I seek the everlasting ices of the north, where you will feel the misery of cold and frost, to which I am impassive" (Shelley, 198). Nature is therefore more merciful with the Creature than it is with Frankenstein. Thus, *Frankenstein* might not have been a warning against the toils of the Industrial Revolution, but rather an expression of Man's helplessness in the face of a harsh and crushingly powerful climate which killed many people, caused hunger and poverty and caused economic difficulties. The next work, *Metropolis* by director Fritz Lang, however probably was criticizing the industrialization of Europe.

1.4. *Metropolis*

Although the 1927 film has got quite a simplistic and hopelessly idealistic message which is that "the mediator between the head and the hand must be the heart," the film is visually interesting and offers a number of intriguing scenes. The opening scene is of the huge and imposing city formed of skyscrapers and pyramid-shaped buildings. The image fades to offer a view of cylinders and turbines turning endlessly. The music makes it clear that these images are to be perceived as threatening. The music then becomes more melancholic as we observe the workers leaving and entering the workers' city. They all walk synchronically, marching at the same slow pace with their heads down and depressed faces.

The dimness of the underworld worker's city is contrasted with the "Club of the Sons." The Club is on the top of the city and it is designed so that the sons of the heads of the city can learn and exercise. The fathers have also created something called "the Eternal Garden" which is reminiscent of the garden of Eden. In this place, the sons of the heads can relax surrounded by sparsely clothed friendly women who entertain them.

The son of the head of the city, Freder, is seen playing with one of the women when Maria, a character we know little of, enters the garden with a group of children. Freder looks

on and quickly falls for Maria. After she is ushered out of the garden with the children, Freder goes after her and discovers the subterranean city of the workers. There he witnesses the explosion of one of the machine, an accident that injures many workers. Shocked by his discovery he goes to alert his father.

Freder's eyes were open by Maria, whom he followed down in the underground of the city. This is reminiscent of Adam, who had his eyes open after eating the apple given to him by Eve, to then go out of the garden and discover the harsh reality of life as a mortal.

After witnessing the incident, Freder goes to see Joh Fredersen, his father, in order to inform him of the cruel conditions in which the people work. The father is only concerned about the fact that the explosion was not reported to him earlier. He fires his aid who has to descend down in the city. Comparably to *Genesis* and *Paradise Lost,* being dismissed by the father means a fall into a dark and unhappy place.

Having learned about his son's love interest, Joh asks Rotwang, an inventor, to make a robot that resembles Maria and to use the robot in order to discredit Maria's reputation. Unfortunately for Joh, Rotwang has other projects in mind and will use the robot in order to thwart Joh. Maria is captured and a false Maria is made.

The scene of the transformation of the robot into the shape of Maria is worth detailing. The scene opens with a close-up of Maria. She is laid down with a helmet-like piece of metal on her head and what looks like big electrodes on her temples and forehead. The second shot shows, at the foreground, her entire body laid down on a table and inside a transparent tube with a succession of rounded metal bands that appear to hold the whole thing together. Rotwang, the scientist is standing next to her, turning a few knobs, whilst in the background, the female-shaped robot is seated on what looks like a throne to which are attached various cables. Many light bulbs and wires appears to be transferring and channelling energy, glass jars filled with bubbling liquids, and a lot of instruments of measure are being checked by the scientist. Rotwang pulls and pushes a series of levers and turns on switches. Many lightning bolts are going back and forth between Maria and a big sort of light bulb that is suspended over her. Theses lightning bolts seem to power a series of circles of light that are moving around the robot. Rotwang is still focused on the work and keeps on controlling the whole process. He is intensely concentrated on his experiment. The whole lab appears to be in motion as decanters and different instruments are moving and lightening up. Gradually, a heart shape light starts to form on the chest of robot. Then something resembling veins appear on the whole robot and, eventually, it takes the shape of Maria as the image of the robot disappears to make way for Maria's features.

The scene is very reminiscent of the 1931 adaptation of *Frankenstein* with Boris Karloff as the Creature with its jars filled with bubbling liquid, the thunderbolts and the metal straps. Moreover, the intensity veering towards madness of Rotwang is not unlike the attitude of the Frankenstein from the 1931 version[5]. Rotwang seems as determined as Frankenstein to

[5] when we first encounter Rotwang and his robot on the occasion of Joh's first visit to Rotwang (in order to ask him for his help concerning a map he found that was made by his workers and without his consent) we realize that something is not quite right with the inventor. Firstly, he is obsessed with Hel, Joh's dead wife, with whom he was in love. Whilst waiting for Rotwang, Joh finds an immense statue in the shape of his dead wife. At the bottom of the monument are engraved the words: "Born for my happiness and mankind's blessing, lost to Joh Fredersen, died giving birth to Freder, Joh Fredersen's son (34'6''). He had actually planned to make a robot

achieve his goal. He has already lost a hand and he will lose his mind and then his life when pursuing Maria, who in his disturbed mind he mistakes for Hel, on the roof of a church. He will wrestle Freder and end up falling to his death. He will die, not unlike Frankenstein without any family or friend, whilst trying to repair what cannot be repaired – in this case, the death of the woman he loved. Like the Monster, the machine created by Rotwang only brings devastation and is proved to be dangerous and uncontrollable.

The character of Freder is the last point I would like to highlight. I already compared him with Milton's Adam. But Freder, or rather the context around this protagonist in two scenes makes him not unlike another character present in *Paradise Lost.* The first scene occurs just after Freder has taken the place of one of the workers and is led by the others to a secret meeting place, a cave that is lit by candles giving it the appearance of a church. There, Maria prophesies the arrival of a mediator between the workers and the leaders of the city. After her prophecy, Freder approaches Maria and declares his love to her. She tells him: "Oh mediator, have you finally come?" (51'27''), and he answers: "You called me – here I am!" (51'35). The religious connotation of the place and of Maria's discourse as well as Freder's reply make him appear to be like the saviour, the Son who interceded for man to his father.

This is literally what Freder is going to do in the final scene. In the final scene, one of the workers walks towards Joh. The two men do not seem to be able to talk to each other. Maria goes towards Freder and says: "Head and hands want to join together, but they don't have the heart to it… Oh mediator, show them the way to each other…" (116'36''). Freder goes forward to his father and the worker, takes their hands and joins them together, this is followed by the message of the film: "the mediator between head and hands must be the heart!" (117'2''). The heavy message of the film hides another one. Freder, like the Son, "sacrificed" himself, although in this case the sacrifice consisted only of a few hours of work and a negotiation with his father, he is hailed as the saviour, the mediator who manages to avoid a conflict.

In conclusion, there is quite a religious subtext in Lang's film, as well as a shadow of *Frankenstein.* Moreover, the film, with its technical prowess, probably influenced one of the most famous screen incarnations of Mary Shelley's novel. *Metropolis* shows a negative perception of a humanlike-robot and of technology in general. The machines are represented by a series of wheels turning with no apparent purpose. It is indicated towards the end that the machines keep the city functioning and stop the water from invading the worker's city but before the workers' revolt, the machines seems to turn endlessly at a deafening rhythm and always have to keep on doing so, even though we do not see the end results. They also make the life of the workers more difficult rather than easier, which is absolutely not the purpose of technology. In *Metropolis*, progress is seen as something that must be restrained, slowed down which is understandable considering the historical context. As it has been shown, *Metropolis* was released in 1927, nine years before Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* which

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with Hel's features before Joh asks him to make a robot that would look exactly like Maria. Secondly, he seems absolutely devoted to his goal which is to bring back Hel. Confronted by Joh, Rotwang says: "For me she is not dead, Joh Fredersen, for me, she lives!" (34'57) he then adds "Do you think that losing a hand is too high a price to pay for re-creating Hel?!" (35'06''). At that point the viewer realizes the purpose of the glove over Rotwang's right hand.

also represents the struggles of industrial workers in the modern world. The repetitive, apparently aimless tasks of the workers are important features of both films. Finally, nature is almost absent and when present it appears very controlled and only available to the rich and powerful.

1.5. *I, Robot*

I, Robot presents a very contrasting point of view to *Metropolis*. Published in 1950, and written by Isaac Asimov, *I, Robot* is a collection of nine short stories which are loosely tied around the interview of one of the characters, Susan Calvin, a robot psychologist. The futuristic story is set in 2057, a time in which robots have become a common feature. The interview and the succession of short stories take the reader through the history of the creation and evolution of the first human-like robots to the book's present day. I will focus on some short stories more than on others, as I find that there are common themes in the stories on which I would like to concentrate.

From the beginning of the interview, Susan Calvin's opinion of robots is clear; she prefers them to humans. When the interviewer tells her his age she replies:

> Then you don't remember a world without robots. There was a time when humanity faced the universe alone and without a friend. Now he has creatures to help him; stronger creatures than himself, more faithful, more useful, and absolutely devoted to him (Asimov, 3).

Calvin does not use the word machine once here but prefers to call the robots "friend," and "creature." To her, robots are simply better than humans. She keeps on saying to the journalist:

> To you, a robot is a robot. Gears and metal; electricity and positrons. Mind and iron! Human-made! If necessary, human-destroyed! But you haven't worked with them, so you don't know them. They're a cleaner, better breed than we are (Asimov, 3).

By calling the robots a "breed" she makes them a species, something that is part of the world's biological ecosystem. She includes them as a kind, a category in its own right.

Calvin also expresses how some people were not as enthusiastic as her about the robots:

> We sold robots for Earth-use then — before my time it was, even. Of course, that was when robots could not talk. Afterward, they became more human and opposition began. The labor unions, of course, naturally opposed robot competition for human jobs, and various segments of religious opinion had their superstitious objections. It was all quite ridiculous and quite useless. And yet there it was. (3-4).

So it is obvious that the creation of robots, particularly human-like robots, caused concern amongst a part of the population. She dismisses all those objections as futile and superstitious. Her answer to those people who she says called her and her colleagues: "blasphemers and demon-creators" (4) is to remember Robbie, one of the very early non-speaking robots who was used as a nursemaid around the time when Calvin was still a teenager.

In "Robbie," a quite endearing story, the relationship between a robot and a little girl can be observed. Gloria, an eight-year-old girl has a robot, Robbie, who is her nurse, her friend and playmate. The words "companion" and "faithful" are used to describe Robbie (5). They play hide and seek for hours and he takes her on his shoulder as she imagines being the captain of a ship, a pilot or flying in a spaceship:

Robbie's metal skin, kept at a constant temperature of seventy by the high resistance coils within, felt nice and comfortable, while the beautifully loud sound her heels made as they bumped rhythmically against his chest was enchanting (6).

Everything therefore seems to be perfect. Gloria is looked after and cared for whilst being entertained. Yet, Gloria's mother starts to have doubts and sends the robot back to U.S. Robots and Gloria does not take the news well at all: "He was not no machine [sic]! […] He was a person just like you and me and he was my friend. I want him back" (11).

Gloria appears to have completely associated Robbie with a human being, she sees him as a person, an equal. On the one hand it could be interpreted as wrong that a little girl develops such feelings of love for a robot who, after all, is designed to act as he does, and be as caring as he is. On the other hand, it also shows the level of empathy this child has for another creature. Moreover, this creature was made by humans and if this creature is so loveable and caring it could say a lot about humanity itself. Gloria will not heal from her separation from Robbie and will be reunited with her friend. During the reunion, Robbie saves Gloria's life. The act is a token of the creature's good nature but it is also the first sign of humanity's dependence on machines in these stories and this dependence is again exemplified in the next short story.

In "Runaround", Powell and Donovan are abandoned by their robot, Speedy, and they have to resolve to using old robots to find Speedy. On this occasion, the change in relations between robots and humans is revealed. When Powell talks to one of the old robots, he finds out that those were made in order to be very servile and obedient:

> "You! Do you hear me?"
>
> The monster's head bent slowly and the eyes fixed themselves on Powell. Then, in a harsh, squawking voice — like that of a medieval phonograph, he grated, "Yes, Master!"
>
> Powell grinned humorlessly at Donovan. "Did you get that? Those were the days of the first talking robots when it looked as if the use of robots on Earth would be banned. The makers were fighting that and they built good, healthy slave complexes into the damned machines" (22).

Apparently, during the period of which Powell is talking, the time when robots were seen with apprehension, the only status available to the robots was the one of slave. Robbie was a maid and the robots of the station slid even further down the hierarchy and became slaves.

"Runaround" also shows a different type of dependence than the one developed in "Robbie." Indeed, the dependence in this story is not just an emotional one; if Speedy does not bring back the selenium Donovan and Powell will surely die in awful circumstances. This is a survival type of dependence, the robot has become almost as important as food and water; without him they cannot survive in this harsh environment. This is proved at the end of the story when Powell realises that the only way to bring back Speedy is to beg him to save his life:

> "Speedy! I'm dying, damn you! Where are you? Speedy, I need you."
>
> He was still stumbling backward in a blind effort to get away from the giant robot he didn't want, when he felt steel fingers on his arms, and a worried, apologetic voice of metallic timbre in his ears.
>
> "Holy smokes, boss; what are you doing here? And what am I doing — I'm so confused —"

> "Never mind," murmured Powell, weakly. "Get me to the shadow of the cliff — and hurry!" There was one last feeling of being lifted into the air and a sensation of rapid motion and burning heat, and he passed out (32).

Another interesting element that appears in the quote above is the difference in speech and familiarity between the two generations of robots: the old one, as mentioned before is respectful, almost pompously, and deferential whilst Speedy sounds more like a cool young man talking to his employer. Speedy and Powell seem to have more of a friendly relationship.

In "Robbie" and "Runaround" two elements can be observed. The first one is that the development of a friendship between man and robot is possible, yet why? After all a robot is only a machine, it acts the way it does because it has been programmed to, not because of affection or love. However, some of the characters seem able to feel attached to those creatures. What does that say about humanity? As said before it could be misplaced affection or it could be the proof of a capacity for empathy and the reflection of humanity's affinity with its creatures.

The second element is the dependence those characters have to their robots. Gloria does not seem to be able to be happy without Robbie and how could she after having met a creature that will always care for her and always entertain her? Powell and Donovan could not have survived on Mercury without Speedy, this became absolutely apparent when Speedy started to dysfunction. Is that a healthy and normal situation? If humans rely on something they created themselves does that reflect badly on them or is it just a case of good evolution?

In the next story, "Reason," Cutie is a very advanced and intelligent robot that was made in order to manage a control a space station by himself. Donovan and Powell are to verify that Cutie is indeed capable of running the station alone. However, things do not always go as planned with robots and a week after its creation Cutie starts to develop an existential crisis. It begins when he questions Powell about his origins. Cutie wonders how he was created and who created him. Powell answers him: "One week ago, Donovan and I put you together" (34). Cutie does not believe that, so Powell, who feels sympathy for the first robot ever to wonder about his creation, decides to explain things in further details and talks to him about the universe, the planets, the stars and Earth with its millions of inhabitants. Yet, Cutie still does not believe Powell:

> "Do you expect me," said Cutie slowly, "to believe any such complicated, implausible hypothesis as you have just outlined? What do you take me for?"
>
> Powell sputtered apple fragments onto the table and turned red. "Why damn you, it wasn't a hypothesis. Those were facts"
>
> Cutie sounded grim, "Globes of energy millions of miles across! Worlds with three billion humans on them! Infinite emptiness! Sorry, Powell, but I don't believe it. I'll puzzle this thing out for myself. Good-by" (35).

Cutie is a very peculiar robot in that he does not trust people; he wants to understand how the world works by himself. His condescension towards humans translates into his language. He does not call Powell "master" or "boss" but simply "Powell," just as another human would. Cutie thus decides to figure out the mysteries of the world and of his own existence on his own. He comes back a few days later with some interesting deductions:

> "I have spent these last two days in concentrated introspection," said Cutie, "and the results have been most interesting. I began at the one sure assumption I felt permitted to make. I, myself, exist, because I think–"
>
> Powell groaned, "Oh, Jupiter, a robot Descartes!"
>
> […] Cutie continued imperturbably, "And the question that immediately arose was: Just what is the cause of my existence?
>
> Powell's jaw set lumpily. "You're being foolish. I told you already that we made you." […] The robot spread his strong hands in a deprecatory gesture, "I accept nothing on authority. A hypothesis must be backed by reason, or else it is worthless — and it goes against all the dictates of logic to suppose that you made me." […] "Look at you," he said finally. "I say this in no spirit of contempt, but look at you! The material you are made of is soft and flabby, lacking endurance and strength, depending for energy upon the inefficient oxidation of organic material — like that." He pointed a disapproving finger at what remained of Donovan's sandwich. "Periodically you pass into a coma and the least variation in temperature, air pressure, humidity, or radiation intensity impairs your efficiency. You are makeshift.
>
> "I, on the other hand, am a finished product. I absorb electrical energy directly and utilize it with an almost one hundred percent efficiency. I am composed of strong metal, am continuously conscious, and can stand extremes of environment easily. These are facts which, with the self-evident proposition that no being can create another being superior to itself, smashes your silly hypothesis to nothing" (36-37).

In a week and two days Cutie arrives to the same conclusion as Descartes. He also estimates that being more efficient, stronger and more intelligent than Powell and Donovan he cannot possibly have been created by them. His creator must have been a lot more powerful. This is a deduction that has also been made by many cultures. In *Genesis*, God is indeed far more powerful than Adam and Eve.

Shocked yet eager to find out about his reasoning Donovan presses Cutie to express who he thinks is his creator:

> "Very good, Donovan. That was indeed the next question. Evidently my creator must be more powerful than myself and so there was only one possibility."
>
> The Earthmen looked blank and Cutie continued, "What is the center of activities here in the station? What do we all serve? What absorbs all our attention?" He waited expectantly.
>
> Donovan turned a startled look upon his companion. "I'll bet this tinplated screwball is talking about the Energy Converter itself."
>
> "Is that right, Cutie?" grinned Powell. "I am talking about the Master," came the cold, sharp answer.
>
> It was the signal for a roar of laughter from Donovan, and Powell himself dissolved into a half-suppressed giggle.
>
> Cutie had risen to his feet and his gleaming eyes passed from one Earthman to the other. "It is so just the same and I don't wonder that you refuse to believe. You two are not long to stay here, I'm sure. Powell himself said that at first only men served the Master; that there followed robots for the routine work; and, finally, myself for the executive labor. The facts are no doubt true, but the explanation entirely illogical. Do you want the truth behind it all?"
>
> "Go ahead, Cutie. You're amusing."
>
> "The Master created humans first as the lowest type, most easily formed. Gradually, he replaced them by robots, the next higher step, and finally he created me to take the place of the last humans. From now on, I serve the Master" (37-38).

Here it is, the Book of *Genesis* according to robots in just a few sentences. God, or as Cutie calls it the "Master" is the Energy Converter. The humans are the animals who were created

firth and the robots are Adam and Eve, whilst Cutie would be the Son. The humans really do become inferior to the robots in this scenario and the rest of the robots soon follow Cutie and do not obey Donovan and Powell anymore:

> The robots, dwarfed by the mighty L-tube, lined up before it, heads bowed at a stiff angle, while Cutie walked up and down the line slowly. Fifteen seconds passed, and then, with a clank heard above the clamorous purring all about, they fell to their knees.
>
> Donovan squawked and raced down the narrow staircase. He came charging down upon them, complexion matching his hair and clenched fists beating the air furiously. […]
>
> "Stand up!" he roared.
>
> Slowly, the robot obeyed. His photoelectric eyes focused reproachfully upon the Earthman.
>
> "There is no Master but the Master," he said, "and QT-1 is his prophet" (38-39).

Of course, as the Son, Cutie is the only one capable of communicating with the God or Master. He is the prophet who came to "save" the robots. Cutie thus takes complete control of the station whilst Donovan and Powell are confined to a room where they are being taken care of and fed.

Up to now, the stories in *I, Robot* have shown robots sometimes acting strangely in unexpected situations. In the two preceding stories, "Runaround" and "Reason" we are presented with two robots who have been implanted with modified Laws. This influences their behaviour and makes them less predictable but the First Law always ensured that no harm would come to humans. Yet the two next stories I am going to analyse, "Liar!" and "Little Lost Robot" demonstrate elaborate scenarios that open the door onto the more negative side of robotics.

"Liar!" is the story of Herbie, a robot who is able to read human minds. The problem is that Herbie has not been designed to read minds. The only possible solution to this sudden phenomenon is that somewhere, during Herbie's assemblage something has gone wrong. Susan Calvin, her superior Alfred Lanning and her two colleagues Peter Bogert and Milton Ashe are trying to find out where exactly the mistake was made. They all proceed to task differently and Susan as a robotpsychologist goes to interview the mind-reading robot in order to find out more about the extents of this anomaly. But soon the interview is being reversed and Herbie starts to talk to Susan about Milton Ashe of whom she is secretly in love. At first reticent, Susan ends up asking Herbie if the feelings are mutual and Herbie assures her that they are.

Meanwhile, the two mathematicians, Bogert and Lanning, are trying to figure out the problem mathematically. They both have very different theories and Bogert who at one point doubts his calculations goes to ask Herbie for help as he has heard that the robot is a genius at mathematics. Once there, Herbie assures Bogert that actually he is very bad at mathematics and that as Bogert suspected Lanning is indeed retiring and that Bogert is going to replace him at the post of director.

Overjoyed to hear the news, Bogert goes back to his office and when Lanning comes to see him he confronts the director saying that he knows that he is retiring and that him, Bogert, is going to be his successor. Not believing that Herbie told him this news, Lanning goes with Bogert to see Herbie. Susan Calvin is already in the room in which she rushed after Milton

Ashe told her that he was going to propose to his girlfriend. The two mathematicians soon come to the same conclusions to which Calvin arrived minutes earlier: Herbie is lying.

As Calvin figured out, Herbie is lying because he is following the First Law. He is telling humans what they want to hear in order to not hurt their feelings. Robots could not lie before because they could not read minds, they had no idea if what they were going to say would hurt the humans or not. Yet, Herbie can and he has been implanted with the First Law that tells him that he cannot hurt a human being in **any** way.

Herbie finds himself faced with a dilemma when Bogert and Lanning ask him what was the mistake that made him able to read minds because the robot knows that the two mathematicians would be hurt in their egos if they were given the answer to this problem by a robot, a machine. Herbie explains this to Susan Calvin:

> I'm a machine, given the imitation of life only by virtue of the positronic interplay in my brain — which is man's device. You can't lose face to me without being hurt. That is deep in your mind and won't be erased. I can't give the solution." "We'll leave," said Dr. Lanning. "Tell Calvin." "That would make no difference," cried Herbie, "since you would know anyway that it was I that was supplying the answer." Calvin resumed, "But you understand, Herbie, that despite that, Drs. Lanning and Bogert want that solution." "By their own efforts!" insisted Herbie. "But they want it, and the fact that you have it and won't give it hurts them. You see that, don't you?" "Yes! Yes!" "And if you tell them that will hurt them, too" "Yes! Yes!" Herbie was retreating slowly, and step-by-step Susan Calvin advanced. The two men watched in frozen bewilderment. "You can't tell them," droned the psychologist slowly, "because that would hurt and you mustn't hurt. But if you don't tell them, you hurt, so you must tell them. And if you do, you will hurt and you mustn't, so you can't tell them; but if you don't, you hurt, so you must; but if you do, you hurt, so you mustn't; but if you don't, you hurt, so you must; but if you do, you–"
>
> Herbie was up against the wall, and here he dropped to his knees. "Stop!" he shrieked. "Close your mind! It is full of pain and frustration and hate! I didn't mean it, I tell you! I tried to help! I told you what you wanted to hear. I had to!"
>
> The psychologist paid no attention. "You must tell them, but if you do, you hurt, so you mustn't; but if you don't, you hurt, so you must; but–"
>
> And Herbie screamed! (74-75).

Herbie dies, killed by the insoluble dilemma and through Calvin's mental oppression. She too could not face the fact that a robot had fooled her, the robotpsychologist. In that case, the First Law actually made more damage than good because by trying to make the humans around him happy, Herbie actually made their life more difficult by putting them in very awkward positions and could have been very dangerous.

"Little Lost Robot" also shows a robot who is not acting as he should and who is out of control. It is a very strange case in which a robot has disappeared on one of the space stations. Peter Bogert and Susan Calvin are sent to the station to find him. Once there, Susan Calvin is informed that the robot in question, Nestor 10, has been modified. The First Law implanted in his brain was reduced to " a robot cannot harm a human being" and the part about "not letting a human being getting hurt through inaction" was removed as that robot was used in a context in which humans were very slightly exposed to gamma fields for such a short period of time that it would not be harmful. In that situation, normal robots would jump and attempt to drag the human out of the gamma field. By doing this they would interrupt the work of the humans

and more importantly kill themselves, as they cannot stand even the slightest amount of gamma waves.

However, Susan Calvin is worried by the reduction of the First Law, because as she illustrates to Bogert, a robot with a shortened First Law could drop a stone onto a person if it calculated that he was able to reach that person in time to save him. But after having dropped the stone he could change his mind and decide that actually what was dangerous for the human was the falling of the stone, i.e. gravity and therefore remain inactive, as it was gravity doing the harming not him.

Additionally, as Calvin explains to Bogert:

> All normal life, Peter, consciously or otherwise, resents domination. If the domination is by an inferior, or by a supposed inferior, the resentment becomes stronger. Physically, and, to an extent, mentally, a robot — any robot — is superior to human beings. What makes him slavish, then? Only the First Law! Why, without it, the first order you tried to give a robot would result in your death (81).

Bogert does not believe the situation to be so dramatic and he expresses that to Calvin:

> "Susan," said Bogert, with an air of sympathetic amusement. "I'll admit that this Frankenstein Complex you're exhibiting has a certain justification — hence the First Law in the first place. But the Law, I repeat and repeat, has not been removed — merely modified" (81).

The Frankenstein Complex Bogert is talking about is interesting as it is expresses what is going on in this story. U.S. Robots has created a creature that is stronger and more intelligent than humans and as explained by Calvin, without the First Law the robot will lose the respect for the humans and turn against his creators in the same way the Monster turned against Frankenstein and the creator ended up fearing his own Creature.

After Susan Calvin tried to explain that the robot was unstable, the two scientists attempt to find the origin of the robot's disappearance. They interview the man who was working with the robot before it went away. He tells them that he got angry at Nestor 10 after it kept on correcting and making suggestions and he told the robot to "get lost" amongst a series of other insults. Calvin deduces that the Nestor 10 only followed the orders and did effectively get lost. The way he did that was by disappearing into the crowd of robots on the station.

Eventually, after trying different techniques to distinguish Nestor 10 from the other robots, Susan Calvin manages to trick the robot into revealing himself. The robot explains:

> "I have been told to be lost– "
>
> Another step. "I must not disobey. They have not found me so far — He would think me a failure — He told me — But it's not so — I am powerful and intelligent–"
>
> The words came in spurts.
>
> Another step. "I know a good deal — He would think... I mean I've been found — Disgraceful — Not I — I am intelligent — And by just a master... who is weak — Slow–"
>
> Another step — and one metal arm flew out suddenly to her shoulder, and she felt the weight bearing her down. Her throat constricted, and she felt a shriek tear through.
>
> Dimly, she heard Nestor 10's next words, "No one must find me. No master–" and the cold metal was against her, and she was sinking under the weight of it (94).

He then attempts to attack Calvin but what remains of the First Law implanted in his brain prevents him of really harming her and a quickly deployed gamma field destroys him.

Nestor 10 had a superiority complex comparable to the one Cutie developed, but the reduction of the First Law implanted in his brain meant that the consequences of this superiority complex were a lot more dangerous and the robot, as Susan Calvin had predicted, became unstable. From what we have seen on the previous cases, robots go rogue or act strangely when the Three Laws are being modified, diminished or if something goes wrong in the making of the robot as in Herbie's case. Otherwise the Three Laws make sure that the robots act like perfect humans. In most cases, they are better member of society than the majority of people.

In "Evidence" we are presented with a perfect man who is suspected to be a robot. The narrator is always vague enough to keep the reader guessing by suggesting but never revealing if Byerley is indeed a robot or not.

In 2032, Stephen Byerley, an attorney who is in the run for the post of Mayor, is accused by one of his political opponents, Francis Quinn, of being a robot. Not much is known about Byerley, he was severely injured in a car crash a few years ago in which his wife died. He slowly recovered and became an attorney. According to the investigators Quinn sent to look into Byerley, the man never eats, never drinks and never sleeps. Yet, Byerley is very clever and he wants to play Quinn at his own game by letting him go public with what he sees as a farfetched idea and wild speculations. As Lanning remarks, if Byerley is a robot, he is a very confident one. Although maybe not so confident after all as the narrator indeed indicates that:

> perhaps not all the confidence that Dr. Lanning had remarked upon was present that evening when Byerley's car parked on the automatic treads leading to the sunken garage and Byerley himself crossed the path to the front door of his house (120).

The lack of confidence at that moment could indicate that Byerley is a robot but it could also just be a sign of Byerley's anticipation of the electoral campaign ahead of him.

In his house, Byerley talks with a cripple called John, but again nothing in the conversation proves at any point that Stephen Byerley is a robot:

> The cripple's voice was a hoarse, grating whisper that came out of a mouth forever twisted to one side, leering out of a face that was half scar tissue, "You're late, Steve."
>
> "I know, John, I know. But I've been up against a peculiar and interesting trouble today."
>
> "So?" Neither the torn face nor the destroyed voice could carry expression but there was anxiety in the clear eyes. "Nothing you can't handle?"
>
> "I'm not exactly certain. I may need your help. You're the brilliant one in the family. […] "Quinn's campaign will be based on the fact that he claims I'm a robot."
>
> John's eyes opened wide, "How do you know? It's impossible. I won't believe it."
>
> "Oh, come, I tell you it's so. He had one of the big-shot scientists of U. S. Robot & Mechanical Men Corporation over at the office to argue with me."
>
> Slowly John's hands tore at the grass, "I see. I see."
>
> Byerley said, "But we can let him choose his ground. I have an idea. Listen to me and tell me if we can do it" (120).

The conversation in direct discourse is vague enough to not give anything away one way or the other. All that is known is that Byerley needs John's help, whoever that is.

After revealing to Quinn the fact that Byerley eats does not prove he is not a robot, Susan Calvin tells him what are the two ways of proving Byerley is a robot:

> The two methods of proof are the physical and the psychological. Physically, you can dissect him or use an X-ray. How to do that would be your problem. Psychologically, his behavior can be studied, for if he is a positronic robot, he must conform to the three Rules of Robotics. A positronic brain cannot be constructed without them (121).

The simple solution would therefore be to wait for Byerley to break one of the Rules, and Quinn would then be sure that he is human. But, as Calvin points out, things are not so easy because:

> the three Rules of Robotics are the essential guiding principles of a good many of the world's ethical systems. Of course, every human being is supposed to have the instinct of self-preservation. That's Rule Three to a robot. Also every 'good' human being, with a social conscience and a sense of responsibility, is supposed to defer to proper authority; to listen to his doctor, his boss, his government, his psychiatrist, his fellow man; to obey laws, to follow rules, to conform to custom — even when they interfere with his comfort or his safety. That's Rule Two to a robot. Also, every 'good' human being is supposed to love others as himself, protect his fellow man, risk his life to save another. That's Rule One to a robot. To put it simply — if Byerley follows all the Rules of Robotics, he may be a robot, and may simply be a very good man (121).

Thus following the three Rules does not prove anything apart that Byerley is a model citizen. Lanning suddenly objects that Byerley is actually not following the Rules as he is an attorney and prosecutes people who can then be sentenced to death, therefore harmed. Yet, Calvin highlights the fact that a robot could in fact kill a human being to save other humans. If a man attacked a family, and could only be stopped by being killed, the robot would have no choice but to kill the man for the greater good. Moreover, as Calvin indicates, Byerley only pleads the case, it is the judge who sentences the accused. Calvin also looked into Byerley's career and she found out that:

> he has never demanded the death sentence in his closing speeches to the jury. I also find that he has spoken on behalf of the abolition of capital punishment and contributed generously to research institutions engaged in criminal neurophysiology. He apparently believes in the cure, rather than the punishment of crime. I find that significant." […]Actions such as his could come only from a robot, or from a very honorable and decent human being. But you see, you just can't differentiate between a robot and the very best of humans" (122).

Calvin therefore sees being a robot very positively; to her, a robot is a very good human being.

Quinn's last attempt to prove that Byerley is a robot will be an X-ray, but this will also fail as the image will be overexposed possibly due to the fact that Byerley was wearing a protective shield. If Byerley was indeed wearing a protective shield, it could indicate that he is robot.

Time has now come for Byerley's first and final strike. He decides to make a speech in public even though he knows that a lot of anti-robot fundamentalists will be in the crowd. Before he starts his speech, Byerley is confronted with a man who urges him to punch him to prove he is really human. After hesitating, Byerley hits the man who became more and more aggressive. His speech is barely listened to, Susan Calvin who was present tells a journalist that this proves that Byerley is really human and Byerley wins the elections.

Susan Calvin meets Byerley again, she presents him Quinn's theory:

> "I suppose you knew his theory?"
>
> "Parts of it."

> "It was highly dramatic. Stephen Byerley was a young lawyer, a powerful speaker, a great idealist — and with a certain flare for biophysics. Are you interested in robotics, Mr. Byerley?"
>
> "Only in the legal aspects."
>
> "This Stephen Byerley was. But there was an accident. Byerley's wife died, he himself, worse. His legs were gone; his face was gone; his voice was gone. Part of his mind was bent. He would not submit to plastic surgery. He retired from the world, legal career gone — only his intelligence, and his hands left. Somehow he could obtain positronic brains, even a complex one, one which had the greatest capacity of forming judgments in ethical problems — which is the highest robotic function so far developed.
>
> "He grew a body about it. Trained it to be everything he would have been and was no longer. He sent it out into the world as Stephen Byerley, remaining behind himself as the old, crippled teacher that no one ever saw–"
>
> "Unfortunately," said the mayor-elect, "I ruined all that by hitting a man. The papers say it was your official verdict on the occasion that I was human" (129).

Byerley then explains to Calvin that he spread the word himself that he could not hit a man, that he had never been in a fight and that it proved that he was a robot. He was hoping that someone would confront him and that this would help him win the elections. Calvin points out how disappointed she is that Byerley is a human because, she reasons, a robot would be perfect in such a position of power:

> I like robots. I like them considerably better than I do human beings. If a robot can be created capable of being a civil executive, I think he'd make the best one possible. By the Laws of Robotics, he'd be incapable of harming humans, incapable of tyranny, of corruption, of stupidity, of prejudice. And after he had served a decent term, he would leave, even though he were immortal, because it would be impossible for him to hurt humans by letting them know that a robot had ruled them. It would be most ideal" (129-130).

Yet, she too has her own theory. According to Calvin, Quinn overlooked a crucial element:

> For the three months before the election, this Stephen Byerley that Mr. Quinn spoke about, this broken man, was in the country for some mysterious reason. He returned in time for that famous speech of yours. And after all, what the old cripple did once, he could do a second time, particularly where the second job is very simple in comparison to the first."
>
> "I don't quite understand."
>
> Dr. Calvin rose and smoothed her dress. She was obviously ready to leave. "I mean there is one time when a robot may strike a human being without breaking the First Law. Just one time."
>
> "And when is that?"
>
> Dr. Calvin was at the door. She said quietly, "When the human to be struck is merely another robot" (130).

Susan Calvin's theory softens some the edges of this story. Indeed, would Byerley, a very intelligent "man", just hope to be attacked by a random person? Or would he perfect every detail and make sure to be able to hit a humanoid robot in front of thousands of people and strike two birds with one stone by ensuring himself to win the elections and put an end to the dangerous rumors? This theory would also explain the presence of the mysterious crippled man. But it could very well be that Susan Calvin loves robots so much that she prefers to believe a great man such as Byerley to be a robot rather than a human. Therefore, doubt will always persist.

If Byerley is indeed a robot, what are the implications? If he really is a robot he is better than most humans. He is very intelligent, kind, selfless, immortal and devoted to humanity. Does the perfection of the creature reflect badly on the creator? Does the creature dwarf its creator? Up to now the creatures made by humans always became evil. The Creature created by Frankenstein turned towards cruelty arguably because of the lack of care provided by his creator. I have proposed before that the Creature could be seen as a mirror of Frankenstein, showing the most evil part of the creator, which is his lack of empathy. The second creature is the evil Maria, made by Rotwang. She was created in order to inflict pain and destruction and that is exactly what she did. She therefore could also be said to be a reflection of Rotwang's monstrosity. If the "real" Stephen Byerley really created the robot "Stephen Byerley" it can therefore only reflect positively on him. A man who succeeded to make a better version of himself in order to do good should not be seen as lesser than his creature.

In the final story, "The Evitable Conflict," Susan Calvin reveals that, without knowing it, humanity does not have control over its destiny anymore. The Machines have taken complete control of the economy in order to protect humanity. The First Law created a situation in which the Machines had to protect themselves in order to be able to protect humanity. Calvin thus argues that society does not have a clue in which direction it is heading, the only certainty is that the robots are leading the dance:

> perhaps a complete urbanization, or a completely caste-ridden society, or complete anarchy, is the answer. We don't know. Only the Machines know, and they are going there and taking us with them."
>
> "But you are telling me, Susan, that the 'Society for Humanity' is right; and that Mankind has lost its own say in its future."
>
> "It never had any, really. It was always at the mercy of economic and sociological forces it did not understand — at the whims of climate, and the fortunes of war. Now the Machines understand them; and no one can stop them, since the Machines will deal with them as they are dealing with the Society, — having, as they do, the greatest of weapons at their disposal, the absolute control of our economy."
>
> "How horrible!"
>
> "Perhaps how wonderful! Think, that for all time, all conflicts are finally evitable. Only the Machines, from now on, are inevitable!" (147-148).

The Machines have taken over, and apart from Byerley and Calvin no one knows that they have. The robots have gone from nurses and slaves, to deferential employees, to overconfident supervisors, to (possibly) politician and leader of the world, to then control the whole economy of the world. But what does this story tell about humanity itself? It appears that it never really had any control over its destiny, it was always ruled by a few powerful families, or by the environment and the wars. It thought it was in control when actually it was not. The statement Susan Calvin makes is postmodern in the sense that it highlights humanity's powerlessness in the face of progress and the economy but it also indicates that this is not necessarily a bad thing. It is just the way it is. Moreover, it reverses a centuries long metanarrative which put mankind as the most powerful and important of all species, in control of its environment, of its destiny and possessor of free will.

2. Chapter Two: *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and the Postmodern Assault upon the "Human"

Published in 1968, Philip K. Dick's dystopian futuristic novel combines many of the themes that have been broached in the first chapter. Of course, it still demonstrates the whole creature/creator dynamic that we have observed in *Genesis, Paradise Lost*, *Frankenstein,* to some extent in *Metropolis* but also in *I-Robot.* The creation of androids puts humans into a position of superiority where the creatures are considered as "the other."

Do Androids Dream[6] shows the main protagonist, Rick Deckard, evolve during the span of a day (the 3rd of January 1992) in a damaged and deserted San Francisco. After the World War Terminus, of which no one seems to remember the purpose or the instigators, the Earth is covered by a toxic dust that has killed off most of the fauna and flora. As a consequence, a lot of the world's human population has left to live on other planets where they use androids, human-looking robots, as servants or rather slaves as the androids are not being paid for their services.

The only people who stayed on Earth are, partly, the ones that were too affected by the toxic dust that has caused them mental and physical damages. They are called "specials" and are refused the right not only to emigrate but also to marry or to bare children. Those interdictions were put in place in order to preserve the human race from mutations and degeneration. J.R. Isidore, the second and slightly minor-focus character of the story, finds himself in that situation. Isolated from the rest of a patronizing society, he lives alone in an abandoned flat in which television, radio and the empathy box are his only companions as well as his main means of communication with the rest of the surviving humans. The empathy box is a device used by every human, special or not, and which allows people to share their emotions with the rest of humanity and to empathise with Mercer, their spiritual leader, a sort of Christ-like figure. Isidore works for a false vet-company that makes artificial animals for people who cannot afford real ones. Indeed, because the dust has killed most of the animals, they have become a sort of luxury item, a proof of high social status. Additionally, taking care of a living animal is concordant with Mercer's teachings which are that all life must be protected. Thus, people who have not enough money to possess a real animal buy a fake one in order to avoid being looked down on by their neighbours.

Contrarily to Isidore, Deckard stayed on Earth not because he was affected but because, like a small part of the population, he could not really bring himself to leave. Moreover, his job requires him to stay on Earth as he is a bounty hunter, someone who hunts down and "retires," that is kills, androids who escape from the space-colonies. That day, Rick is charged to find and destroy six escaped androids who are considered dangerous because they killed their masters before fleeing to Earth where they wish to remain and live undetected. He hopes that the money from the bounty will allow him to buy a real animal in order to replace the electric sheep he bought after his real one died.

The androids he is charged to find look exactly like humans. The only way to differentiate them from members of the population is to make them take the Voight-Kampff

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[6] Due to the lengthy title of Dick's novel I will always use this shortened version in future references

test, which measures their physical reactions to a series of questions related, mostly, to animal cruelty. Indeed, androids do not have empathy; they can only try to bluff. But they cannot fake the correct physical reactions and the Voight-Kampff test detects those reactions or lack thereof. Empathy appears to be the only element that separates humans from androids.

Right away, on the basis of this summary, it can be observed that *Do Androids Dream* contains many themes. One of those is the very segregated nature of the society depicted in the novel. I will explore this theme now in a few sentences as it is somewhat outside of the main focus of this thesis.

Do Androids Dream shows a very neatly divided society in which some lives are granted more importance than others. Humans are valued the most, they have rights, are protected, they are considered as well as people are (ideally) in our contemporary society. Then, come the 'chickenheads' or 'specials', such as Isidore. They do not have the right to emigrate or to have children, they are given jobs that require no qualifications, they are considered as less than human and are called 'chickenheads' or 'antheads' because of the damages caused to their brains by the toxic dust. They have been abandoned by society and in some cases even androids denigrate them because of their low mental capacities. Thirdly, the androids themselves end up at the bottom of this fictional society. They are not considered to be human at all. They are basically slaves, even if they have very high mental abilities and look exactly like humans. Androids blend very well in society. Without being tested, nobody can say if they are humans or not; thus underlining the artificiality of the criteria and classifications put in place by the humans. Finally, it could be said that the animals are valued even more than the specials and the androids. Nevertheless, as I will point out later on, it could be argued that animals are mainly used as a social status symbol.

The other themes of *Do Androids Dream* contain more ecocritical aspects. Firstly, the aftermath of World War Terminus presents an apocalyptic vision that shows a devastated Earth, thus underlining the negative effects that technology can have. Loneliness and the eventual disappearance of the human race as well as the rest of the Earth's fauna is therefore a running theme. The third main theme of the book on which I will focus is the android; or more precisely the difference between androids and humans. Indeed, the presence of the android acts as a trigger and forces us to ponder over the essence of the human. Is the artificial human equal to the natural one? What is it to be human? Those are questions that are put forward in the novel and that I will approach in this first part which deals with the relation between androids and humans.

2.1. Humans versus Androids:

When an artificial creature looks and behaves almost exactly like a human being it drives one to ask: What is it that distinguishes humans from humanoids? Usually, intelligence and language is what distinguishes humans from the other animals but in this case, the androids are as (if not more) intelligent than the humans. Empathy, in this case, appears at first to be the essential differentiating feature that separates humans from androids. And the Voight-Kampff test seems to be the ideal way of distinguishing a human from an android. The androids, devoid of empathy, should logically be cold creatures and this is the opinion of some theoreticians who worked on Dick's works. Among those is Umberto Rossi who, in *The*

Twisted Worlds of Philip K. Dick says of the androids in *Do Androids Dream* that they are "selfish and merciless creatures" (164). His theory is that Dick:

> uses androids, cold emotionless beings whose only purpose is selfish self-preservation at the expense of others, to present us with anamorphic images of those human beings who are as cold, selfish and cruel as them (164).

In order to test this theory I shall analyze a few extracts from the book in which androids appear and I will observe their behaviour, as well as the behaviour of the human characters.

The first time we encounter an androids is at the beginning of the novel, when Rick Deckard goes to the Rosen Association, the firm that makes the androids, to verify that the Voight-Kampff scale is still efficient and detects the new generation of androids (the Nexus-6 type). Indeed, Deckard's chief, Bryant, is afraid that the Voight-Kampff scale might be obsolete, as he heard rumours that it might indicate a human to be an android if that human suffers from schizophrenia and therefore has limited emotional responses.

Deckard is received by Rachael Rosen and her Uncle Eldon who are supposed to present him with a selection of humans and androids in order to make sure that the test still works. Once there, after having laid down his equipment, Rachael Rosen announces that she wants to take the test first. Rick Deckard accepts and starts the procedure:

> Rick, selecting question three said, "You are given a calf-skin wallet on your birthday." Both gauges immediately registered past the green and onto the red; the needles swung violently and then subsided (41).

Rachael seems to have the correct physical response to this imaginary scenario presented to her, but it is not always so with all of her answers:

> "You are watching an old movie on TV, a movie from before the war. It shows a banquet in progress; the guests are enjoying raw oysters." "Ugh," Rachael said; the needles swung swiftly. "The entrée," he continued, "consists of boiled dog, stuffed with rice." The needles moved less this time, less than they had for the raw oysters (44).

From this "wrong" physical response amongst a few others, Rick concludes that Rachael is an android. However, Eldon Rosen contradicts Deckard and explains that the lack of emotional development demonstrated by Rachael is due to the fact that she grew up aboard a spaceship. This means that the Voight-Kampff test is therefore obsolete. Deckard cannot go on and kill the androids as he will not be sure they are androids, he will not be able to collect the bounty money. The Rosens explain to Deckard that it is not in their interest if the Voight-Kampff scale does not work, as they will have to stop the production of Nexus-6s.

A blackmailing scene ensues:

> "Your superior Mr Bryant," Eldon Rosen said, "will have difficulty understanding how you happened to let us void your testing apparatus before the test began."
>
> He pointed toward the ceiling, and Rick saw the camera lens. His massive error in dealing with the Rosens had been recorded. "I think the right thing for us all to do," Eldon said, "is to sit down and –" He gestured affably. "We can work something out, Mr Deckard. There is no need for anxiety. The Nexus-6 variety of android is a fact; we here at the Rosen Association recognize it and think now you do, too."
>
> Rachael, leaning toward Rick, said, "How would you like to own an owl?" […] [Eldon Rosen] glanced at his niece inquiringly. "I don't think he has any idea –"
>
> "Of course he does," Rachael contradicted. "He knows exactly where this is heading. Don't you, Mr Deckard?" Again she leaned toward him, and this time closer; he could smell a mild perfume

> about her, almost a warmth. "You're practically there, Mr Deckard. You practically have your owl." To Eldon Rosen she said, "He's a bounty hunter; remember? So he lives off the bounty he makes, not his salary. Isn't that so, Mr Deckard?" (47-48).

Yet, later in the conversation, Deckard notices that Rachael keeps on referring to the owl using the pronoun "it." Which can be interpreted as a sign that she is an android because androids do not care for animals as much as humans do. Deckard thus decides to ask her one more question:

> "My briefcase," Rick said as he rummaged for the Voigt-Kampff forms. "Nice isn't it? Department issue."
>
> "Well, well," Rachael said remotely.
>
> "Babyhide," Rick said. He stroked the black leather surface of the briefcase. "One hundred percent genuine human baby-hide." He saw the two dial indicators gyrate frantically. But only after a pause. The reaction had come, but too late (50).

This gap before the reaction allows Deckard to identify with certitude Rachael as an android even though she herself did not seem to be aware of that fact. Indeed, androids can have implanted memories that make them believe they had a childhood, that they went through all the different stages of evolution a human goes through and that they had all sorts of previous experiences. The truth is that they are actually assembled a few months before going online.

After Eldon has acknowledged that Rachael is indeed an android, Deckard concludes that the Voight-Kampff scale is still valid and up-to-date and decides not to go any further with the test. He does not examine the selection of androids and humans that had been prepared for him. He also learns that the owl that had been previously offered to him as a bribe is also artificial. All the birds died, they were the first victims of the war's aftermath.

This first encounter with an android is far from positive. Rachael lied to Deckard about the owl, she blackmailed him, attempted to bribe him and tried to manipulate him. It could therefore, from this scene, be said that the androids are indeed the cold and calculating machines Rossi describes. Yet, Eldon Rosen is also cold and manipulative. It could actually be argued that he is the one who instigated the whole incident. Being the eldest, and being a human, he probably instructed Rachael before the meeting took place. It is clear at least that they were working together. Deckard himself admits later that he made a mistake by viewing them as individuals when he should have approached them as a unit (47).

Moreover, Deckard does not test the selection of androids and thus does not make sure that it is absolutely perfect and efficient. The risks he takes are high. Indeed, we still do not know if the test would be able to make the difference between an android and a schizophrenic. What if he retires a schizophrenic? Does that mean that schizophrenics are not human? If the quality that sets the difference between an android and a human is empathy, this excludes the schizophrenics from the human group. This is a question that has also been asked by Christopher A. Sims in "The Dangers of Individualism and the Human Relationship to Technology in Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*":

> If empathy is the unique human essence that technology cannot successfully reproduce, does a human whose affect fails to represent the expected emotional response cease to be a human? (75-76).

The next time Rick Deckard meets an android is when he goes to meet up with a bounty hunter from the WPO, the Soviet equivalent of the police. Deckard is asked by his chief to

hunt down Polokov, the first android on his list, with Sandor Kadalyi, the soviet agent, in order to show Kadalyi how these new androids function. Instead of waiting for Kadalyi, Deckard goes to find Polokov who is considered a very dangerous rogue android as he shot at the previous bounty hunter, Dave, who was after him. When he was found by the previous bounty hunter, Polokov was pretending to be a chickenhead, someone affected by the dust, and he was working for a scavenger company, as many other specials do because they are considered too stupid to do anything else. Dave was almost killed because he forgot for a moment that Polokov was only pretending to be a special but was not actually intellectually limited. Deckard decides to go to Polokov's workplace in order to find him but he learns that Polokov has not come to work that day. Deckard goes back to his car and waits for Kadalyi who arrives soon enough:

> As he shook hands with Kadalyi, Rick noticed that the WPO representative carried an unusual type of laser tube, a subform which he had never seen before. […] "How does it differ functionally?" Rick asked. He couldn't tell. "Press the trigger." Aiming upwards, out of the window of the car, Rick squeezed the trigger of the weapon. Nothing happened; no beam emerged. Puzzled he turned to Kadalyi. "The triggering circuit," Kadalyi said cheerfully, "isn't attached. It remains with me. You see?" He opened his hand, reavealed a tiny unit. "And I can also direct it, within certain limits. Irrespective of where it's aimed."
>
> "You're not Polokov, you're Kadalyi," Rick said.
>
> "Don't you mean the other way around? You're a bit confused."
>
> "I mean you're Polokov, the android; you're not from the Soviet police." Rick, with his toe, pressed the emergency button on the floor of his car.
>
> "Why won't my laser tube fire?" Kadalyo-Polokov said, switching on and off the miniaturized triggering and aiming device which he held in the palm of his hand.
>
> "A sine wave," Rick said. "That phases out laser emanation and spreads the beam into ordinary light."
>
> "Then I'll have to break your pencil neck." The android dropped the device and, with a snarl, grabbed with both hands for Rick's throat.
>
> As the android's hands sank into his throat Rick fired his regulation issue old-style pistol from its shoulder holster; the .38 magnum slug struck the android in the head and its brain box burst (80-81).

This second introduction to the Nexus-6s is obviously more violent; the android is obviously dangerous. He attempted to kill humans twice but each time in self-defence and they were hurt only because they underestimated him. They both forgot that the Nexus-6s are very intelligent. Dave could be forgiven this mistake as it was the first time he was dealing with such androids. But Deckard had already met Rachael when he started to look for Polokov, he should have known that the android would not have been waiting for him at the place of his previous cover but would have tried to find another place of hiding, or another cover. It is true that he might not have expected Polokov to come to him under the guise of a member of the Soviet police; that was quite a forward move.

However, the next android on Deckard's list is no less resourceful. Luba Luft is an opera singer, a very talented one. Her singing abilities allowed her to quickly find a very good position and so to swiftly fade into human society. Luba Luft is rehearsing when Deckard goes to administer the Voight-Kampff test to her. The bounty hunter sits down to listen to her

and is surprised by her great voice. In his opinion, she is better than a lot of the artists he is used to listen to, even better than some of the ones that were alive before the war.

After the rehearsal, Deckard goes to Luba Luft's dressing room, identifies himself as belonging to the San Francisco Police Department and asks her to pass the test. She replies:

> "Do you think I'm an android? Is that it?" Her voice had faded almost to extinction. "I'm not an android. I haven't even been on Mars; I've never even *seen* an android!" Her elongated lashes shuddered involuntary; he saw her trying to appear calm. "Do you have information that there's an android in the cast? I'd be glad to help you, and if I were an android would I be glad to help you?"
>
> "An android," he said, "doesn't care what happens to another android. That's one of the indications we look for."
>
> "Then," Miss Luft said, "you must be an android."
>
> That stopped him; he stared at her.
>
> "Because," she continued, "your job is to kill them, isn't it? You're what they call—" She tried to remember.
>
> "A bounty hunter," Rick said. "But I'm not an android."
>
> "This test you want to give me," her voice, now, had begun to return. "Have you taken it?"
>
> "Yes." He nodded. "A long, long time ago; when I first started with the department."
>
> "Maybe that's a false memory. Don't androids sometimes go around with false memories?"
>
> Rick said, "My superiors know about the test. It's mandatory."
>
> "Maybe there was once a human who looked like you, and somewhere along the line you killed him and took his place. And your superiors don't know." She smiled. As if inviting him to agree.
>
> "Let's go on with the test," he said, getting out the sheets of questions (87-88).

She then agrees to take the test but only if Deckard takes it before her. He refuses, saying that she wouldn't be able to administer it. I transcribed this conversation in its entirety because I think it demonstrates several interesting elements. The first one is that it shows how close humans and androids are. Indeed, it is said at the beginning of the conversation that Luft's eyelashes move involuntarily, betraying her emotions. This shows that androids, like humans cannot perfectly control their body and mind. They also have involuntary movements and mimics that show their different states of mind, which is something you would not expect from a machine.

The second observation that can be made from this conversation is that Luft has a great ability with language. Her intelligence allows her to bring confusion into Deckard's mind and to unnerve him with questions about his identity. She cleverly turns the tables on him by implying that Deckard himself could be an android. This in turn insinuates doubt in the reader's mind. As I had highlighted in a previous essay, this conversation begs an interesting question: Could the protagonist of the story be an android as well?

Finally, I find that the whole dialogue is very much reminiscent of the one between Frankenstein and the Monster when Frankenstein finds himself face to face with the Creature whilst walking in the mountain. Indeed, it appears that Luft underlines an aspect that has been brought up by the Monster himself. Namely: "Who is the Monster?" Just after Frankenstein lashes out at the Monster, the Creature reminds him that he is not the only culprit and that Frankenstein has to bear the responsibility for some of the events that took place. As in *Frankenstein*, *Do Androids Dream* presents us with a situation in which the creature is

rejected by the creator and decides to confront it creator. Except that the androids are a lot more discreet than the Creature. They resemble more Stephen Byerley; like him they try to avoid confrontations, and they use their intelligence to pass for humans. Although contrarily to the character from *I-Robot,* they have an instinct of survival that is far more developed and they care less for the wellbeing of humans than Byerley does.

In the end, as can be seen from the dialogue, Deckard does not manage to bring a forceful proof of his human identity. All his arguments are calmly shattered one after the other by Luft. Deckard has to cut the argument short by starting the test during which Luft will again use her brilliant mind to counter several of his questions, mainly by asking for the meaning of some words and asking Deckard to repeat questions making it impossible to use the results of the measures. She then rubs off one of the adhesives placed on her cheek, Deckard goes down on his knees to retrieve it and he gets up to find Luft pointing a gun at him. She accuses him of being a pervert saying that his questions have increasingly a sexual connotation. She reads some of the questions his sheets:

> "In a magazine you come across a full-page color picture of a nude girl." Well, that's one. "You became pregnant by a man who has promised to marry you. The man goes of with another woman, your best friend; you get an abortion." The pattern of questioning is obvious. I'm going to call the police (91).

Deckard therefore finds himself in a very ironic situation in which the android he is supposed to test and then retire has called the police when he actually is the police. But the situation becomes truly Kafkaesque when the policeman called by Luft fails to recognize Deckard. Deckard calls Bryant so that he can explain to the policeman that Deckard is indeed a bounty hunter but as he passes the phone to the policeman the connection is interrupted and the policeman arrests Deckard. Luft not only managed to indicate that Deckard too could potentially be an android, she also deflated all his questions and successfully had a bounty hunter arrested. She could have killed him when she had that laser gun pointed at him but she chose to call the police. This decision surprises Rick; indeed, the narrator says: "it seemed strange to him that Luba had decided to do this; why didn't she simply kill him" (92).

Deckard then tries to prove to the policeman that he is a real bounty hunter by showing him Polokov's body, but that only puts him in more trouble as an android's body looks exactly like a human body, the only way to differentiate the two is to make a bone-marrow analysis. To the policeman, and now to the reader, Deckard could be a bounty hunter, but he could also be a murderer. After that, things become even more complex when Deckard is taken to a police station he never heard of. There, nobody recognizes him and he is taken into the chief's office. As it turns out, the police station is fake and filled with androids who pass themselves for members of the police force. Garland, the chief of the police station is an android; he is third on Deckard's list. This fake police station proves two things:

Firstly, the androids are very well organized. Indeed, they managed to create an entire parallel police station without attracting anybody's attention. They also seem to control if not all, at least part, of the phone system as they twice interrupted phone conversations. The first time when Deckard was calling Bryant from Luft's dressing room, and the second when he was calling his wife from the fake police station.

Secondly, it proves that androids actually do care for each other. At the beginning of the conversation between Deckard and Luft, Deckard said that androids do not care for each other, presumably comparing them to humans who do. However, when Luft called the fake police station, someone came to help her. This policeman might have been human or android, but he was sent from the fake police station which is run by androids and they decided to save her from the bounty hunter.

In his office, Garland points his gun towards Deckard but quickly brings it down when he realizes that killing Deckard would not change the situation. This is the second time now that Deckard has had a gun pointed at him by an android who then brings it down. Garland, like Luft, attempts to confuse Deckard by telling him that Resch, another bounty hunter, is an android who will probably go mad if he finds out who he really his. This is a lie, Resch is human but he is probably the least humane character of the story.

Indeed, after a while, Deckard realizes that Resch kills androids not because he has too, because he actually likes it. He enjoyed killing Garland and when he kills Luba Luft he also likes it. Deckard ends up despising Phil Resch. All the time he is with Resch, Deckard suspects him of being an android because of his general coldness and indifference for humans and androids. When the test reveals that Resch is actually human, Deckard is surprised and thinks that maybe something is wrong with him as he notices that he started having feelings of empathy for female androids such as Luba Luft. He actually uses the Voight-Kampff test to measure his empathic response. Resch gives a cruel solution to Rick's feelings. Talking about a hypothetical female android, Resch says: "Go to bed with her first and then kill her" (125). I would like to underline at this point that only Resch takes the test, Deckard never completes it, he only uses it to measure his empathic response towards androids, thus keeping alive the reader's doubts concerning his humanity.

Deckard's change of mind towards androids can be observed in some of his questions. Just after Luba Luft's death, he asks Phil Resch: "Do you think androids have souls?" (117) Later, he wonders: "Do androids dream? […] Evidently; that's why they occasionally kill their employers and flee here. A better life, without servitude" (160). But it is due to probably his most important encounter with an android that Deckard will completely change his mind about androids to then realise a complete U-turn and eventually complete his mission. Deckard is hesitant about the last three androids on his list. After Luba Luft's death he is not sure if he should finish his mission or not. Moreover, he is scared of getting killed; he therefore calls Rachael Rosen, asking her to come down to San Francisco to help him. He sets the meeting in a hotel room and they have sex. After, Deckard has definitely changed his mind about androids:

> "If you weren't an android," Rick interrupted, "if I could legally marry you, I would."
>
> Rachael said, "Or we could live in sin, except that I'm not alive."
>
> "Legally you're not. **But you really are.** Biologically. You're not made out of transistorized circuits like a false animal; you're an organic entity." […] This is my end, he said to himself. As a bounty hunter. After the Batys there won't be any more. Not after this, tonight.
>
> "You look so sad," Rachael said.
>
> Putting his hand out he touched her cheek.

> You're not going to be able to hunt androids any longer," she said calmly. "So don't look sad. Please."
>
> He stared at her.
>
> "No bounty hunter ever has gone on," Rachael said, after being with me. Except one. A very cynical man. Phil Resch. And he's nutty; he works out in left field on his own."
>
> "I see," Rick said. He felt numb. Completely. Throughout his entire body.
>
> "But this trip we're taking," Rachael said, "won't be wasted, because you're going to meet a wonderful, spiritual man."
>
> "Roy Baty," he said. "Do you know all of them?"
>
> "**I knew all of them, when they still existed. I know three, now**. We tried to stop you this morning, before you started out with Dave Holden's list. I tried again, just before Polokov reached you. But then after that I had to wait."
>
> "Until I broke down," he said. "And had to call you."
>
> **Luba Luft and I had been close, very close friends for almost two years.** What did you think of her? Did you like her?
>
> "I liked her."
>
> "But you killed her."
>
> "Phil Resch killed her."
>
> "Oh, so Phil accompanied you back to the opera house. **We didn't know that; our communications broke down about then. We knew just that she had been killed; we naturally assumed by you.**" […]
>
> "So all that took place in the hotel," he said, "consisted of a –"
>
> "**The association**," Rachael said, "wanted to reach the bounty hunters here and in the Soviet Union. This seemed to work… for reasons which we do not fully understand. Our limitation again, I guess."
>
> […] "How many times have you done this?"
>
> "I don't remember. Seven, eight. No I believe it's nine."
>
> She – **or rather it** – nodded. "Yes, nine times" (my emphasis; 171-173).

This dialogue perfectly demonstrates the change that occurs in Deckard's perception of androids. At the beginning of the story, he seemed indifferent, then after the meeting with Luba Luft, when he noticed her vocal talent and that he has feelings of empathy for female androids, he started to question himself and the job he was doing. Perhaps he wanted to explore these feelings further in order to reach a conclusion and put a term to his hesitations by meeting up with Rachael Rosen. He does fall for her, and does not see her as a machine anymore. He also recognizes the hypocrisy of the law that says that androids are not alive, even though they actually are living and breathing beings.

Yet, when he realizes that he has been cheated by Rachael, Deckard completely reverses his way of thinking again. This can not only be observed in the coldness and shortness of his sentences, but mainly through the use of the pronoun "it" that abruptly comes to replace the "she" that had been employed to refer to Rachael up until then. It is normal that Deckard feels cheated; he suddenly realizes that the girl he was falling for had sex with him only to stop him from killing other androids.

However, he should have remembered that he had been tricked by Rachael Rosen once before and he probably should have been more careful. Additionally, he is the one who fixed the meeting in a hotel room. He certainly did not set up the rendezvous in such a place with innocent intentions. Furthermore, when he was in the fake police department, he had already seen that androids do take care of each other. Now, further proof is made that they indeed try to help each other as much as possible and that they have the same kind of relations as humans do. Indeed, Rachael talks of her friendship with Luba Luft, her relationship with the other android escapees and the existence of something called "the association" which, apparently, is an android organization that tries to protect androids. Finally, it should be noted that although Rachael has taken advantage of Deckard, she has not rejected him, she has only been honest; she could have hidden the truth from him. She also wanted to include him in her group and introduce him to the other androids.

The more the reader advances in the story, the more this distinction between androids and humans appear to be absolutely artificial. This is an element uncovered by Jill Galvan, who in "Entering the Posthuman Collective in Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*" not only notes that Rachael shows real attachment to her android companions, but she also quotes N. Katherine Hayles who pays close attention to one episode in particular that occurs after Deckard has completed his mission and killed all the remaining androids. Hayles writes:

> He returns home to discover that Rachael has pushed [his] goat off the roof. Why? Because she is jealous of his love for the goat, or in revenge for his killing her friends…? Whichever interpretation one chooses, the action is not consistent with the official picture of android psychology, which like Dick's essays insists that androids are incapable of feeling loyalty or indeed feeling anything at all (quoted in Galvan 415).

All these arguments make me disagree with Rossi's conclusion concerning the androids. I do not find that they are "cold and emotionless beings" or that they demonstrate fewer feelings of empathy. They can be manipulative, but not more than the humans, they actually appear to care about each other more than the humans do. The main protagonist of the story has no real friends, his marriage is in danger; he is, in one word, lonely, as is the second protagonist. Indeed, all the humans in the story only seem to care about their animals and even that, as Jill Galvan shows, is a product of social conventions. The animals have become rare and therefore possessing one is a sign of wealth. This can be seen in the conversation between Deckard and his neighbour, Barbour, at the beginning of the novel:

> "God," Rick said futilely, and gestured empty-handed. " I *want* to have an animal; I keep trying to buy one. But on my salary, on what a city employee makes –" […]
>
> "You could buy a cat," Barbour offered. "Cats are cheap; look in your Sidney's catalogue."
>
> Rick said quietly, "I don't want a domestic pet. I want what I originally had, a large animal. A sheep or if I can get the money a cow or a steer or what you have; a horse" (10-11).

Rick wants an animal like people want cars or the newest, hippest technological device. And he does not just want any animal, he wants a big one, an expensive one because he knows the effect it will have on his neighbours. In the end, it seems that owning an animal is for parading rather than preserving the damaged ecosystem. Moreover, it also shows that one is a good follower of Mercerism and those are, after all, the two reasons behind Deckard's owning

an electric animal. If all Deckard, or people in general, wanted were to preserve the animals there would not be such an extended market of artificial animals. The artificial animal market is flourishing in that dystopian world partly because of nostalgia (people might want to keep an animal because it reminds them of the time before the war) but mainly because appearances are crucial. This analysis could lead towards an interpretation of the title. The question "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?" could mean: are androids so different from humans? Are they worse than humans or are they simply as flawed and imperfect as their makers?

2.2. Technology as part of humanity

These makers, after all, have to use machines such as the mood organ in order to feel something. Are they so natural as they pretend to be if they are walking around feeling artificial emotions? It becomes evident at this stage that the surviving humans of this apocalyptic world are very lonely and rely heavily on technology. They use the mood organ as soon as they wake up, television and radio, with the presenter Buster Friendly, are essential items that are used to break the solitude and they access their religious leader, Mercer, with the empathy box which also allows them to connect with everyone in the Solar system.

There is therefore this conflicting relation that exists between humans and technology, between the creators and their creatures. On the one hand, technology helps to break the loneliness-struck humans; on the other, it alienates and separates them. The later is the opinion of Jill Galvan who bemoans the influence of technology in the life of those humans she calls "posthuman." Galvan notes how Mercerism and the use of the empathy box separates more than it unites humans. She takes as an example the influence the empathy box has on Rick's relationship with his wife, Iran. Galvan quotes a passage in which Rick notices the separation that the empathy box creates between him and Iran:

> Going over to the empathy box, she quickly seated herself and once more gripped the twin handles. She became involved almost at once. Rick stood holding the phone receiver, conscious of her mental departure. Conscious of his own aloneness (153).

According to Galvan, Mercerism is a tool used by the government in order to keep the population under control. Galvan ascertains that the figure of Mercer, a rebel who was persecuted for bringing back to life dead animals, is used in order to nip in the bud any possible revolution as it allows people to participate in a minor unrest but quietly and in their home. Mercerism would then be a sort of cathartic experience used by the state to keep its citizens in check and the revelation of the fraud that is Mercer appears to confirm this hypothesis.

Additionally, Galvan notes Isidore's dependency to the television and radio. Excluded from society, Buster Friendly is his only companion and Isidore never forgets to switch on the television even if he has to watch commercials that are not addressed to him and that are painful constant reminders of the rejection he has suffered. The television has become a substitute for friendship.

Galvan therefore writes that both television and the empathy box separate the members of society. She adds that the situation is particularly ironic in the case of the empathy box as it is supposed to bring people together on the basis that it is accessed through the feeling of mutual

care people supposedly naturally feel for each other. Yet, Galvan indicates, if the empathy box separates rather than unites, the empathy that represents the beacon of humanity which differentiates natural beings from artificial one is seriously undermined.

Galvan goes further in her theory as she adds that:

> By enunciating and publicizing an ethic of empathy, the political order conceals this dependence on the mechanical; it maintains the fallacy of a cohesive fraternity of autonomous human subjects. Indeed, only by prolonging the public's belief in Mercerism and in essential human empathy can the state obscure how much technology has invaded individual lives – how much the mediated spectacle permits the government a check on its citizens' activities. It is thus in the best interest of the political authorities to ostracize the androids, since the android – a fully animated and thoroughly intelligent creature – directly challenges the individual's perceived biological mastery over the machines that surround her in her quotidian environment. And besides alerting the citizen to her already infringed subjectivity, a community in which humans and androids freely coexist would resurrect the ultimate threat to the totalitarian state: that its diverse members, joined by mutual affinities and demands, will rise up against the power that dominate them (1997; 418-19).

As it develops, Galvan's reasoning starts to gradually sound like a conspiracy theory. It appears to me that contrarily to what Galvan says, the government does not care about what happens on Earth. It does not hide the influence of technology. On the contrary, it promotes it. Indeed, at the beginning of the book the reader learns through the character of Isidore that the UN used the androids as an incentive. If people emigrated to the space colonies, they would receive an android servant. If they did not they would slowly die because of the toxic dust. That is what we learn through Isidore in chapter two:

> A meagre colonization program has been underway before the war but now that the sun has ceased to shine on Earth the colonization entered an entirely new phase. In connection with this a weapon of war, the Synthetic Freedom Fighter, had been modified; able to function on an alien world the humanoid robot – strictly speaking, the organic android – had become the mobile donkey engine of the colonization program. Under UN law each emigrant automatically received possession of an android subtype of his choice, and, by 1990, the variety of subtypes passed all understanding, in the manner of American automobiles of the 1960s (13).

Technology is therefore not masked but put forward and the androids are not ostracized, they are not hidden away, but are part of the life of the inhabitants of the colonies. Yet, it is true that they are not treated as equals. They are considered as slaves with no legal rights whatsoever, that is why sometimes they escape and must therefore be killed as they might otherwise rebel and try to elevate themselves to the same level as the humans at which point the humans would not be able to enslave them anymore. This is why Buster Friendly, an android, makes his big exposé; he wants to bring down the barriers erected between man and android. His attempt at discrediting Mercerism is made in order to show that androids and humans are not so different after all. However, I would like to point out a contradiction in Galvan's reasoning. Indeed, she criticizes the effects of technology on the novel's characters whilst strongly defending the androids as if she had forgotten that the androids are, in the end, also a product of technology.

Additionally, if the government that is in charge of this surviving population was as powerful and totalitarian as Galvan pretends, they would have more control over their androids. The artificial humans would not escape so easily and they would not have had the opportunity to organize themselves as well as they have (as shown before, they have an entire

underground network that they use to protect themselves against the bounty hunters and they are in almost constant communication with each other). It rather seems that the state is not very focused on controlling either the androids or the humans. It does not really care about the people remaining on Earth. The government only tries to persuade the last few people who remained on Earth and who are still physically and mentally sane to emigrate in order to perpetuate the human race and they denigrate the right to emigrate to the ones who are too affected by the toxic dust to protect the purity of the species.

What the reader is faced with in *Do Androids Dream* is a desolated Earth sparsely populated by very lonely people who, for the most part, have been abandoned by their government, or what remains of it, after a war of which nobody remembers the reason and which had no apparent victors. Nobody cares about having dominion over the Earth or the few people who stubbornly still refuse to leave it. It thus becomes clear that the powers that be are not as powerful as Galvan proposes and that what can be observed in the novel is more a fragile state of survival in which loneliness and death are constant shadows that keep on appearing at the corner of the protagonists' eyes.

It is therefore not completely foolish to propose that Mercerism was probably created in order to bring a spiritual companionship to the remaining people, to help them have a feeling of connection with each other and with someone who has seen death, has conquered it and has come back in a different form to give guidance to his followers (comparably to Jesus-Christ in the New Testament but also as the Son in *Paradise Lost* who reassured Adam and Eve when they became faced with the inevitability of death and of a lonely life outside of Eden).

This is after all exactly the role Mercerism plays when Isidore learns from Buster Friendly, at the same time as the rest of the solar system, that Mercer is a fake, an alcoholic actor who has been paid to play this role. This is probably the most harrowing scene of the novel in which the reader has a clear window onto Isidore's pain as the eventuality of death dawns on him. Two elements play a significant role in Isidore's sudden despair. The first one is the cruel destruction of a spider by the androids that live in his apartment. The second is of course the revelation of Mercer's artificiality:

> Maybe it *had* been the last spider on Earth, as Roy Batty said. And the spider is gone; Mercer is gone, he saw the dust and the ruin of the apartment as it lay spreading out everywhere – he heard the kipple coming, the final disorder of all forms, the absence which would win out. It grew around him as he stood holding the empty ceramic cup; the cupboards of the kitchen creaked and split and he felt the floor beneath him give (185).

Buster Friendly's revelation was most certainly made in an attempt to prove that androids and humans are not so different after all. By bringing down the barriers that were before held up using the pretext of empathy he probably hoped to bring humans and androids closer. However, he underestimated the importance of Mercerism and the role it played in the humans' morale. The person(s) who created Mercer did it in order to reassure and bring peace of mind to the survivors who were seeing their world slowly dying in front of them. By presenting them with a spiritual leader, who, as I said before, had seen death and conquered it and who showed his followers that death was only a necessary part of a cycle of life, the creator(s) of Mercerism eased off the pain.

Those positive effects can be observed directly when Mercer appears to Isidore in order to comfort him. Isidore calls out to Mercer:

> "Mercer!" […] the old man faced him, a placid expression on his face.
>
> "Is the sky painted?" Isidore asked. "Are there really brush-strokes that show up under magnification?"
>
> "Yes," Mercer said.
>
> "I can't see them."
>
> "You're too close," Mercer said. "You have to be a long way off, the way the androids are. They have better perspective."
>
> "Is that why they claim you're a fraud?"
>
> "I am a fraud," Mercer said. "They're sincere; their research is genuine. From their standpoint I am an elderly retired bit player named Al Jarry. All of it, their disclosure, is true. They interviewed me at my home, as they claim; I told them whatever they wanted to know, which was everything."
>
> "Including about the whisky?"
>
> Mercer smiled. "It was true. They did a good job and from their standpoint Buster Friendly's disclosure was convincing. They will have trouble understanding why nothing has changed. Because you're still here and I'm still here." […] "I lifted you from the tomb world just now and I will continue to lift you until you lose interest and want to quit. But you will have to stop searching for me because I will never stop searching for you." […] Mercer held out a closed hand, palm up. "Before I forget it, I have something of yours here." He opened his fingers. On his hands rested the mutilated spider, but with its snipped-off legs restored (186-187).

Once again, it can be affirmed that technology is not hidden. Mercer happily admits that he is a fraud. However, we also learn that technology, and here in particular Mercerism, is necessary. The humans need it to fight the feeling of despair when they realize what has happened to their planet and when they are hit by the reality of the future they are going to live in. The androids, with their more rational minds do not understand the importance of Mercerism and Mercer's role as a guide a companion to the lonely humans.

In this optic, the empathy box scene with Iran and Rick analyzed by Galvan as a proof of the separating power of technology could simply be seen as another scene in which we see the loneliness that strikes the novel's human characters. In the same way, the second scene Galvan analysed which sees Isidore watching commercials that are not addressed to him and which are constant reminders of his plight can also be seen differently. Indeed, Isidore does not suffer from technology, he suffers from the exclusion that has been imposed on him by his peers. Buster Friendly, an android, thus becomes, through the medium of television and radio, his friend and companion. To sum up, one thing is certain; technology is definitely part of the characters' daily lives. Yet, where Galvan advocates a mournful acceptance of that fact others prescribe an embracing of technology.

This is the view held by Christopher A. Sims who indicates that technology is part of the essence of the human. Indeed, he asks:

> But what is technology? Most would agree that, on one level, technology is the adaptation of available material or knowledge into an instrument or process that provides humans with an advantage over their environment […] The word "advantage" in this context suggests an evolutionary framework, in which all forms of life are struggling with one another (or at the more congenial level, using each other) in order to increase their own chances at survival. From this perspective technology might be considered as an evolutionary adaptation that humans have acquired and used to gain dominance over the other forms of life or aspects of nature (rivers, weather, raw materials, etc.) on the overarching ecosystem we call Earth (2009; 67-68).

As I wrote in the small introduction to this second chapter, ecology is a significant presence in the book and Sims' perspective lends itself very well to an ecocritical analysis. Indeed, remembering that technology is part of the human and has always played a role in the evolution of humanity allows us to see technology under a new, more positive light. Technology is the intermediary between humans and their environment. It is a way of controlling and channelling it, a means of survival. It is however true that, in this particular novel, technology took part in the almost total destruction of Earth. But, if technology is to be understood as a part of humanity then this disaster shows not just the danger of technology but also a part of humanity. Technology is a double-edged sword which, in the wrong hands can make a lot of damage, but the hand is always human.

Sims believes that *Do Androids Dream* "shows us that technology can be used as a guide to return the survivors of World War Terminus to the humanity that they have abandoned for solipsistic individualism" (68). Sims thus goes in the same direction as I do when he proposes that Mercerism can be one of the technological solutions for the loneliness that strikes the survivors of World War Terminus:

> [Mercerism] creates an empathic synthesis of every human mind. From within this synthesis each individual has the knowledge that he or she is not stumbling through reality alone, that there is in fact an 'other' with whom we can actually connect and commiserate (80).

Mercerism thus humanizes rather than dehumanizes human relations. It brings people together and makes it possible for them to have a feeling of shared experience. This is why it is still relevant even after Mercer has been revealed to be a fake by the equality-hungry Buster Friendly.

Another piece of technology that can be used in order to break the isolation that has fallen onto the humans is quite simply the android. The humanoid resembles humans so much that until it is tested, it fits so perfectly into human society that it goes undetected. But why are androids made to look so much like humans? Eldon Rosen gives the reason for this during a conversation with Deckard:

> "This problem," Rick said, "stems entirely from your organization to evolve the production of humanoid robots to a point where –"
>
> "We produced what the colonists wanted," Eldon Rosen said. "We followed the time-honoured principle underlying every commercial venture. If our firm hadn't made these progressively more human types, other firms in the field would have (Dick, 46).

However, this is only one piece of the puzzle. Why do the colonists want the androids to be as human as possible? A simple answer to that is that the colonists want a companion, a human presence in order to fight the otherwise irresolvable loneliness they suffer from. This is also Sims's opinion who, in his essay quotes an add that passes on Isidore's television:

> Either as body servants or tireless field hands, the custom-tailored humanoid robot – designed specifically for YOUR UNIQUE NEEDS, FOR YOU AND YOU ALONE – given to you on your arrival absolutely free, equipped fully, as specified by you before your departure from Earth; this loyal, trouble-free companion in the greatest, boldest adventure contrived by man in modern history […] (Dick, 14).

Here, the android's slave-status can be observed again. One can only imagine what the expression "body servant means" and it becomes understandable that some androids seize the occasion to escape whenever they can. Incidentally, it might be noted that the commercial

does not make any mention of the eventuality of the owner being killed by his freedom–hungry android. Yet, the android is referred to as a "companion" underlining once more the complex relationship that exists between humans and androids. Indeed, it appears that the humans and the androids could live side by side and that the androids could easily be integrated into society. However, they are also referred to as "servant." This means, as Sims notes, that there still exists this binary opposition between "natural" and "artificial" and it shows up every time humans need it to destabilize the balance in their favour. For example, when work needs to be done, the android is an artificial machine, a "servant". As I pointed out before, the distinction between "natural" and "artificial" allows humans to not give any rights to the androids and so to use them as slaves. Or, as seen in the novel, the distinction comes back as soon as the human loses control. Indeed, when Deckard is with Rachel in the hotel room, he comes to a point where he sees her as his equal; he even considers marrying her. However, when he understands that Rachel has used him, the transition from Rachel being his equal to Rachel being an object is instantaneous.

Everything natural is thus considered better than what is artificial, i.e. what is humanly created. Yet, by showing that technology – the "artificial" – is part of the natural and an extension of the human mind, this binary opposition is brought down. Sims proposes that:

> if androids are not seen as technology […] but as real people, the illusion becomes reality and the owner of the android can find genuine companionship in a machine (75).

Although, I must point out that the "owner" of the android could probably not remain an "owner" if he is after true friendship.

Accepting technology as a part of humanity and not as something foreign could therefore help to take responsibility of the destruction caused by humanity in World War Terminus but could also help humans survive and live more comfortably. The last scene of the novel could be a good metaphor of this need for the integration and acceptance of technology. Indeed, after Deckard learns that the toad he brought back home is a fake, he walks to his bedroom in disappointment. However, his wife decides to call a shop that sells artificial animals and to buy electric flies and everything necessary for the toad.

The open-ending leaves a few questions unanswered. For example, why did Deckard kill the last three remaining androids on his list even though he knew he empathized with them? One possible answer would be that he did it out of anger after he felt cheated by Rachel. But a thing is certain: the ending is not a very positive one and Deckard feels like he left some of his humanity behind by finishing the job.

The postmodern ending of the novel also makes it hard to write a definitive conclusion. Yet, a few elements stand out from this novel and the dangerous nature of technology is probably the first to be highlighted. Technology is humanity's best friend and worst enemy. By the same token, humanity is its best friend and worst enemy at the same time. This is logical if we consider technology to be part of humanity. In the novel, technology also appears to be capable of becoming human, or humanoid. The androids are not selfish and cold creatures. They have shown to be able to support and care for each other, and in some cases they also care for humans. It is more than can be said of the majority of the humans present in the novel. Indeed, *Do Androids Dream* present a very divided society in which many citizens are discarded as damaged goods and in which appearances as well as social status matter

enormously. The androids are not worse than the humans who appear distant, lonely, lost and affraid. Technology, however, could be the solution. It has the ability to bring people together, to help them through hard times, to bring them spiritual hope and to reassure them by offering some very human-like company.

Finally, the androids share common qualities with the creatures observed in the previous works. Like Frankenstein's Monster, Stephen Byerley, Adam, Eve and Satan, the androids attempt to elevate themselves to the same level as their makers. There is the revolt aspect that was found in *Frankenstein* and *Paradise Lost,* and like in *Frankenstein*, the creatures clumsily try to get close to their creators. The androids are not as perfect as Byerley, however, they are not as violent as the Monster or Satan.

3. Chapter Three: Contemporary Filmic Responses to the Assault upon the "Human"

3.1. *Blade Runner*

Blade Runner is based on the 1968 novel written by Philip K. Dick. Although built on the same premiss, the film is quite different from the book. There is not as much emphasis put on the destruction of the planet and the residues of World War Terminus. Actually, the war is not mentioned at all. Only some of the images show a crowded city, full of flying cars and over-lit buildings. The same applies for the animals' importance. There are some animals present in the film but most of them are artificial and said to be very expensive. Only during a conversation does one of the characters mention that she could not afford a real animal, as they are too expensive, even more than the artificial ones. Mercerism has also been taken out of the picture, altogether with the empathy box and the mood organ.

Some of these changes can be accounted for when we consider the switch from literature to film. A director simply cannot put as many elements in his film as an author does in his novel simply because of the difference in medium. Another reason for some of these changes could also be due to the time difference between *Blade Runner* and *Do Androids Dream*. Indeed, Dick's novel dates back to 1968, a time during which the ghost of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was still very present in everyone's memory. The negative side of technology thus appeared more striking. Whereas, Ridley Scott released *Blade Runner* in 1982, at period during which technology was felt more as an exciting and promising ally. Indeed, the Cold War was fuelling a race to technological developments amongst which space exploration took an important part up until 1986 at which point the Challenger tragedy dampened the spirits.

However, what has remained of the novel is the criticism of humanity. The humans observed in Scott's film are lonely beings, even more so than in Dick's novel. The setting is, at first sight, very similar to the one we can find in the novel. The protagonist is a bounty hunter who is charged to go after human looking machines, the replicants. Yet, from the small explanatory introduction given at the very beginning it is clear that the film is "rooting" for the replicants. This is the aforementioned prologue:

> Early in the 21st century, THE TYRELL CORPORATION advanced Robot evolution into the NEXUS phase – a being virtually identical to a human – known as a *Replicant*. The NEXUS 6

> *Replicants* were superior in strength and agility, and at least equal in intelligence, to the genetic engineers who created them.
>
> *Replicants* were used Off-world as slave labor, in the hazardous exploration and colonization of other planets.
>
> After a bloody mutiny by a NEXUS 6 combat team in an Off-world colony, *Replicants* were declared illegal on earth – under penalty of death.
>
> Special police squads – BLADE RUNNER UNITS—had orders to shoot to kill, upon detection, any trespassing *Replicant* (2'16").

The prologue describes the replicants as superior to the humans in many ways. It makes no mention of the lack of empathy. This will come later in the film but in a very mitigated way. Indeed, the replicants are not said to lack emotions; they start developing them after a few years. But the engineers who created the replicants see this as a problem because emotions make them less controllable. They thus rectified the problem by making sure that the androids would not live for more than four years.

The mutiny, and crimes of the replicants are not hidden, but neither is the fact that they are being used as slaves and that they are murdered when found on Earth. Another element that fuels the criticism of the humans is the interrogation concerning the identity of the protagonist. I had explored this identity trail in a previous chapter and I will base myself on this research because, as I will explain later, the nature of Deckard's identity could have heavy implications in the analysis of this film but might also create a benchmark for the films to follow.

But before delving into the subject, there is another theme I would like to approach which is the stylistic element of the film; more precisely its Neo-Noir aspect. *Do Androids Dream* had some features of the detective story with Deckard as a bounty hunter chasing the fugitive androids. In *Blade Runner* those detective story elements have been translated into film noir ones. In "Space, Time, and Subjectivity in Neo-Noir Cinema," Jerold J. Abrams describes the codes of the film noir: "detectives, labyrinths, and femmes fatales" (Abrams, 2009, 7). *Blade Runner* contains all of these aspects. There is the hard-boiled detective in the person of Rick Deckard; a character that does not express himself in many words, has a slight drinking problem and works efficiently and alone.

The labyrinth is quite simply the city of Los Angeles. Scott's 2019 version of the famous place is revealed in the opening shot which offers a view of the huge maze-like city full of pyramidal buildings alit with thousand little lights. The city appears to be without end and the constructions are all very similar thus contributing to the labyrinth effect. On top of that, Scott gave an Asian aspect to his Los Angeles with neon-lights and huge advertisement screens. And the scenes were mainly shot during the night making it very hard for any inhabitant of the Californian city to recognize it. Finally, in the documentary *On the Edge of Blade Runner*, it can be learnt that Scott used the same set as the one of *The Big Sleep* and *The Maltese Falcon*, two of the best-known examples of film noir. This makes it clear that the director's intension is to give a film noir feel to his work.

There is one femme fatale in *Blade Runner* and she is named Rachael. Ridley Scott's Rachael has all the looks of the femme fatale. With her tight skirt, her shoulder-padded blazers, her way of smoking, her haircut and her makeup, she strongly resembles Joan

Crawford in *Mildred Pierce*[2]. Rachael is also seen as a potentially dangerous character for a part of the film. During the interview, she seems self-assured but not very menacing, yet when she surprises Deckard in the lift of his building, the bounty-hunter loses his composure, drops his apartment keys and rushes inside his flat to only let her in reluctantly.

However, at this point it should be noted that Scott is only borrowing from these noir elements and is copying mainly the aesthetic features. *Blade Runner* is therefore not a film noir but a neo-noir film; it is intertextual rather than referential and Scott only plays with the noir elements. Indeed, Deckard is not an avid detective, he hates his job and does it only when forced to. Rachael does not betray the hero as a femme fatale would, on the contrary, she falls in love with him, and Deckard, instead of retiring her, escapes with her (although in the *Director's Cut* we never see how they fare because of the open-ending). By the way, during the escape scene it can be noted that the characters' style has noticeably changed. Rachael appears less strict with her hair flowing down and Deckard does not wear the trench coat he had been wearing all along making him look less like a detective. This change could be the sign of a transfer from the 1940s to the 1980s; a clear indication that this film is not noir but neo-noir. As Abrams explains, the neo-noir protagonist differs from the classical noir character in that "rather than looking for a criminal in the city that surrounds him, now the detective's search is for himself, for his own identity and how he may have lost it" (Abrams, 2009, 7).

Indeed, as in *Do Androids Dream*, *Blade Runner* questions Deckard's identity. Ridley Scott took the unanswered interrogation that was present in the novel and developed it. As I indicated in the preceding chapter, Luba Luft asks Deckard if he ever took the Voight-Kampf test himself. This time, in the film, it is Rachael who addresses Deckard: "You know that Voight-Kampff test of yours? Did you ever take that test yourself?"(1.04'45''). In the film however, Deckard does not even attempt to answer the query because he has fallen asleep as we can observe when the camera moves from Rachael and, after a moment, to Deckard. Yet, unlike the novel, the film provides the viewer with more clues concerning Deckard's identity. The camera manages to show a lot and those signs are given from the very beginning of the film.

In the opening scene, we are presented with a view of the futuristic Los Angeles, and the image is cut by a blue eye (probably Batty's eye) in which the city is reflected. This may be interpreted as an indication that eyes have a particular importance in this film. Jason P. Vest paid attention to this and noted in *Future Imperfect* that: "glowing eyes signify a replicant's presence throughout *Blade Runner*" (Vest, 2007, 26). And indeed, the artificial owl at the Tyrell corporation clearly has glowing eyes:

> Leon's eyes glow when he first accosts Deckard, Pris' eyes glow soon after entering J. F. Sebastian's apartment, and Zhora's eyes glow as she runs from Deckard through a crowded alleyway" (Vest, 2007, 26)

Batty's eyes have a red glow when he meets Tyrell, and Rachael's eyes glow on many occasions — once during the Voight-Kampf test and another time in Deckard's apartment.

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[2] Cf. Appendix

Two other scenes appear to support this theory and they both are linked. The first one is a dissolve (which is a technical term used to designate a graduate transition from one image to another) in which an image of Deckard at his piano fades out to leave one of a white unicorn galloping in the woods. The viewer is never given any explanations concerning that scene which seems to have no link whatsoever with the rest of the film. Yet, an element in the last scene might give some clue to the signification of this dissolve. When Deckard and Rachael leave Deckard's apartment in order to run away together, Rachael's foot moves a little piece of tinfoil on her way to the lift. The object attracts Deckard's attention, he picks it up and takes a closer look. It is a tinfoil origami in the shape of a unicorn.

Jason P. Vest indicates that those two scenes prove that Deckard is indeed a replicant as it shows that Gaff, and probably Bryant, have some knowledge of Deckard's memories, in the same way that Deckard had access to Rachael's memories. Indeed, Gaff often made and left these kinds of origami figurines in the homes of the replicants hunted by the bounty hunters. Additionally, when Deckard looks at the tinfoil unicorn, we can hear Gaff's off-screen voice that saying (in a clear echo of an earlier scene): "it's too bad she won't live but then again who does?" (1.47'36").

The viewer may not know why Gaff left the origami unicorn; one thing appears certain, however: Deckard *is* a replicant, and this means (as I alluded to earlier) that for the first time the protagonist of a story is not human. In *Genesis*, *Paradise Lost*, *Frankenstein*, *Metropolis*, *I, Robot* and *Do Androids Dream*, the creatures were at best secondary characters; no matter how charismatic, they never took centre stage in the way Deckard does in *Blade Runner*. This marks a turn in the creature-creators stories and will lead the way for a lot of the films to come, as we will see very soon.

3.2. *Bicentennial Man*

One of those films is *Bicentennial Man* directed by Chris Columbus and based on the short story of the same name and on the novel The Positronic Man by Isaac Asimov. Here, the protagonist is a robot called Andrew. Contrarily to *Blade Runner*, Andrew is clearly presented as a robot; he is mechanical and not organic. At the beginning of the film, he is delivered in a box at his owners' house, and a little like Robbie in *I, Robot,* Andrew is used mainly as a servant and a nurse. In the same way as Robbie did, Andrew develops a friendship with Little Miss, the youngest daughter of the family. Soon, Richard Martin, Andrew's owner (whom he calls "Sir"), notices that this friendship is not the only interesting characteristic that Andrew develops. He is also very creative and carves objects which stem from his own imagination and not from an image. Andrew affirms that he "enjoys" creating things which would then prove that he is capable of developing feelings. Yet, that is not what he was designed to do. Andrew was supposed to be a simple servant, an intelligent robot but that is all. Dennis Mansky, the Head of NorthAm Robotics expresses this very clearly by using the pronoun "it" instead of "he" and by calling Andrew a "household appliance" (26'25").

Such is, after all, what Andrew was supposed to be but NorthAm Robotics made the mistake of not preparing themselves for the eventuality that some of their robots might evolve. In *Blade Runner,* the Tyrell Corporation had built in a four-year lifespan to try and

limit the evolution of these feelings. Here the solution found by Mansky is Andrew's destruction; but this is a solution Martin refuses to contemplate and he decides to give Andrew a job[7].

This raises an issue in terms of who should benefit from Andrew's work. After debating, Martin decides to open a bank account for Andrew. The opening of this bank account marks the first step towards Andrew's bid for freedom and independence. The second will happen with Little Miss's wedding to which Andrew is invited. Indeed, when Little Miss asks Andrew to be present at her wedding, the later asks if he can wear clothes for the occasion. After the wedding, Andrew asks Martin if he can keep on wearing clothes (49'26"). This allows him to feel more humanlike of course but also less like a servant.

Then, Andrew will ask for his freedom. He offers all his money to Sir in exchange for his freedom[8]. This last bid for freedom has the true ring of slavery, especially the part where Andrew proposes to buy his freedom. But here Andrew takes more the role of the "good slave" as he originally wanted to stay in the house with the Martin family and keep on working for them. Additionally, Andrew will take the name "Martin" because it is the name of the family he belongs to; yet this is another reminder of slavery, as American slaves would bear the name of their owners[9].

However, Andrew is still not satisfied with his newfound freedom and decides to push the frontiers a little further. Yet this last move might have been a step too far and there is something utterly disturbing about it. Indeed, Andrew decides, with the help of Rupert Burns, to finish something he already started with NorthAm Robotics when he asked them to modify his face so that he could show more expressions. Andrew wants to become more humanlike. This will become his obsession for the years to come. Andrew, with the help of Rupert Burns, will in turn modify his exterior appearance in order to look like a human (1.12'06"). They will then start working on the interior, by giving him a heart and a nervous system, so that he can feel more things (1.26'44"-1.28'20"). And finally, Burns will make him able to eat food and will provide him with male genitals (1.43'52").

One can of course understand Andrew's need to look more human as it certainly helps him fit better in society. However, Andrew does not stop there and wants to be declared a human being partly because he feels human and partly because he has fallen in love with Portia, Little Miss' granddaughter and would like to marry her. For that he goes to the council of the Earth. There, the President of the Earth and all the representatives of the different countries of the World receive him and he has to present and defend his case:

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[7] Martin decides to give Andrew the opportunity to develop his creativity further and to give him private lessons in order to improve his knowledge and help him fit better in society. Andrew thus follows Martin's suggestion and start making clocks. But soon the clocks start to take too much space and Martin decides to sell them. However, this raises an issue which is: who should receive the money? Martin suggests that the family should receive the money, as a robot would have no use for it. Yet, Little Miss, the youngest daughter who has now grown up, objects to that decision and wants Andrew to be the beneficiary of the fruit of his labour (38'18"). Martin thus asks his lawyer to find a way that will allow Andrew to open an account.

[8] At the beginning reluctant, Martin eventually accepts to give Andrew his independence on the condition that Andrew leaves the house and goes to live far away from the family (Martin also gives Andrew his money back) (56'35").

[9] Sir forces Andrew to find a new independence which will allow him to travel throughout North America in order to find out if there is another robot like him out there. Unfortunately, his search will not bring any results but it will lead him to Rupert Burns, an engineer who will help Andrew to make him look more human.

President of the Earth: "Andrew Martin, step forward please. So Mister Martin, you would like us to place a bill declaring you a human being?"

Andrew: "Yes, specifically, the ability to marry a fellow human being."

PE:"I see. We have to face the undeniable fact that no matter how much you may be like a human being you are not part of the human gene pool. You are outside of it entirely, you are something else, something artificial."

A: "Sir, what about all the real people waiting in the gene pool who have bodies full of prosthetic devices many of which I have invented. You yourself, Sir, have one of my kidneys, do you not? Are you not in some ways artificial, at least in part?"

PE: "In part, yes."

A: "Well, then I'm human in part."

PE: "Which part Andrew?"

A: "This one Sir" (placing a hand on his heart)

PE: "I see… and here?" (the president is pointing towards his own head)

A: "It is true I am still equipped with a positronic brain"

PE: "And because of that positronic brain, you are for all accounts immortal?"

A: "Yes, Sir."

PE: "Well, Andrew, society can tolerate an immortal robot. But we will never tolerate an immortal human. It arouses too much jealousy, too much anger. I am sorry Andrew. This court cannot and will not validate your humanity. I hereby bring an end to the proceedings. It is the decision of this court that Andrew Martin from this day forward will continue to be declared a robot, a mechanical machine, nothing more."

A: "One is glad to be at service" (1.52'00"-1.54'16").

This dialogue brings out many interesting points the first one being the ambiguous relationship between humans and robots. Indeed, technology is not considered as human, yet, humanity depends on technology. Or as seen in the dialogue, Andrew is not part of the gene pool but humans live with the help of artificial organs. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, technology is part of humanity.

Andrew's request will be refused, the President of the Earth objects that, because of his positronic brain, Andrew is immortal and that society could not accept an immortal human. This is a crucial element, as it shows that society is ready to accept to live with robots and is happy with everything Andrew makes but it cannot accept the eventuality of a robot becoming more powerful than humans. If Andrew was to be declared human, he would not just be a human, he would be immortal and that would place him in a dominant position when what the humans want is for the robots to remain servants. This is clearly understood by Andrew and that is why he answers: "One is glad to be at service" - a sentence he was used to repeat during his years as a servant.

Andrew thus decides to become mortal and goes to see Rupert Burns one last time. After that he tries once again to be declared human:

Madam Chairman: "Andrew Martin" (Andrew looks old now)

Andrew: " I've always tried to make sense of things. There must be some reason I am as I am. As you can see Madam Chairman, I am no longer immortal."

MC: "You have arranged to die?"

> A: "In a sense, I have. I'm growing old and my body is deteriorating and like all of you, will eventually cease to function. As a robot, I could have lived forever, but I tell you all today, I would rather die a man than live for all eternity as a machine."
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> MC: "Why do you want this?"
>
> A: "To be acknowledged for who and what I am. No more, no less, not for acclaim, not for approval, the simple truth of that recognition. This has been the elemental drive of my existence and it must be achieved if I am to live, or die, with dignity."
>
> MC: "Mister Martin, what you are asking for is extremely complex and controversial. It will not be an easy decision. I must ask for your patience while I take the necessary time to make a determination of this extremely delicate matter."
>
> A: "And I await your decision Madam Chairman, thank you for your patience" (1.58'33"-2.00'57")

It is interesting to note that Madam Chairman addresses Andrew a lot more respectfully than her predecessor had done previously by referring to him as "Mr Martin" instead of "Andrew." But what is also important to observe here is the way Andrew refers to himself. It appears that Andrew despises his own kind as he describes how he did everything he could during his two hundred years life in order to become human and to cease to be a robot. This reminds me strongly of what can be seen in some of Toni Morrison's novels, especially *The Bluest Eye* in which a young woman tries everything in order to become white thus rejecting her own identity. Andrew was immortal, accepted and respected in his community for his work and appreciated as a friend by the Martins. After all, the representatives of all the different countries of the world twice assembled in order to hear his request. It is not the first time that an android expresses the wish to be more human. In *Do Androids Dream* Luba Luft also had explained how she had always tried to resemble humans, to act and think like a human. But the androids in Philip K. Dick's novel helped and respected each other. Moreover, the androids had to look as human as possible because their life depended on not being discovered. Their decision to look human was therefore motivated by survival. It could however be argued that although Andrew appeared to be accepted in human society, he always felt that he did not belong with humans, he always felt different and, contrarily to Dick's androids, he is utterly alone. His desire to become human is therefore understandable.

Another problem I would like to highlight is the serious inconsistency present in the film. Indeed, according to the Three Laws of robotics which were stated at the beginning of the film, a robot cannot harm itself except to save a human or if he has been ordered to do so. We know because of several little scenes in the film that Andrew obeys those Three Laws (for instance, he obeyed Miss and jumped through a window when she asked him to do so), we also know that Andrew's positronic brain was not altered at any point; even when he decided to become mortal. It should therefore be impossible for him to accept to be made mortal because that would go against the third rule (which states that a robot must protect itself except when it conflicts with the first or second law). It could even be argued that his decision to become mortal goes against the first rule because by becoming mortal he will cause grief to Portia and to the rest of humanity that had profited from his inventions and medical discoveries.

In the end, Andrew will be declared human but he probably died just before hearing the news. It is also revealed that the nurse who attends to Andrew and Portia is Galatea, a robot of the same generation as Andrew who was also physically modified in order to look human.

Seconds after Andrew's death, Portia asks Galatea to unplug her from the machine that is keeping her alive. When the android hesitates, Portia makes clear that it is not a request but an order. Again, there is some incoherence here because logically, Galatea could never unplug Portia, as she is fully aware that this will lead to Portia's death. It goes against the first law (a robot can never hurt a human being through action or inaction) which prevails over the second law which is that a robot must always obey a human being.

These laws were of course implanted in the robots' brains in order to make sure that humans would always have control over them. And this can be observed in the scene just mentioned between Portia and Galatea. Galatea remains a servant, even if she worked for a robot and a human who loved a robot she is always in a position of inferiority. This is a pattern that Andrew himself reproduced when he employed Galatea as his servant/nurse.

Finally, the Three Laws highlight the fact that even if Andrew was to be declared human, he never really was. As long as he had a positronic brain, he had to obey to the Three Laws. He was therefore never completely free and always in a position of inferiority. Those are opposing ideas that the film does not manage to reconcile and they come back strongly again in the last scene. Just before Andrew is declared a human being and just before his death, Portia asks him why he wants approval so much, why it is so important for him to be publically recognized as human. He replies: "I started my existence as a robot, I still like to be told certain things" (2.01'48"). This highlights the fact that, despite everything he says, he remains a robot. He still needs approval, he still needs to be told what to do by humans.

Bicentennial Man is a problematic film that does not quite manage to resolve all the issues that it brings up. It also daringly presents the problematic of the presence of love between a human and a robot. This was something that has already been approached by *Blade Runner*, but the problem had been resolved by the revelation of Deckard's nature. What had been a love affair between a man and a replicant became a love story between two replicants. *Bicentennial Man* also attempted to take the easy way out by, firstly, driving the budding love between Little Miss and Andrew into a dead-end. Secondly, it allowed Andrew and Portia's love affair only once Andrew looked human. And thirdly, it eventually made the marriage valid by performing a u-turn and declaring that Andrew was after all a human being. Indeed, what if this whole story about Andrew's humanity was made in order to avoid shocking the viewer by presenting a love story between a woman and a machine? A good way out of this problematic and scandalous love story would be to declare the protagonist and lover to be a human and not an android even though he has been presented as such during the entirety of the film. Like that, everybody remains where they should be and no one is displeased. After all, as he stated himself, Andrew wanted to be declared human not only to be recognized and accepted but also and mainly to be allowed to marry Portia.

3.3. *Artificial Intelligence, A.I.*

Artificial Intelligence, written and directed by Stephen Spielberg, does not shy away from the conundrum developed in *Bicentennial Man*. The film is set in a future in which the effects of global warming have had deep consequences, on of which is imposed birth control. This means that most people cannot have children or certainly not more than one child per couple. This measure has been taken in order, of course, to limit the population but also in order to

control the amount of pollution. In this world, the robots, or "mechas" have taken a great importance, as they are economical and efficient.

The film clearly focuses on the possibility of love between a robot and a human as it is presented to the viewer in one of the first scenes in which Dr Hobby, the head of Cybertronics, exposes to his team and assembled colleagues, his plan to make a robot that will be able to develop feelings: "I propose that we build a robot child who can love. A robot child who will genuinely love the parents or parent it imprints on with a love that will never end […]" A colleague interjects:

> It occurs to me, with all this animus existing against mechas today it isn't simply a question of creating a robot who can love, but isn't the real conundrum: can you get a human to love them back? (5'07"-5'31")

Hobby responds by explaining how the child would never be sick and that, at a time when a lot of couples are childless, the child robot would be the perfect answer to an existing need. Yet, the colleague sees perfectly that this answer eludes her question and she rephrases it: "If a robot could genuinely love a person, what responsibility does that person hold towards that mecha in return? … It's a moral question isn't it?" Here, Hobby cannot avoid the question anymore but decides to answer it with another interrogation. He replies: "it's the oldest one of all, but in the beginning, didn't God create Adam to love him?" (5'42"- 6'34").

The premise set by Spielberg is a fascinating one and it goes back to the very beginning of the creator-creature relationship. By positioning himself as God, Hobby reveals a lot about how he understands the relationship he has with the robots he makes. The love he talks about is very much a one-way road. First, he makes a robot that will love him, or someone else, unconditionally and then he himself or the human in question can decide if they want to love the robot back. It is an egocentric point of view that puts the robot in a difficult situation, a position of weakness. Once again, as in *Bicentennial Man*, the cards are unfairly distributed and the robot is given a weak hand.

Doctor Hobby thus goes forth with his plan of making a child-robot and in order to test this robot, he finds a family that is in need of a child. The couple he finds has a child, Martin, but he suffers from a disease to which modern medicine has not found a cure yet[10]. All is well until Martin is awaken after a cure has been found for him. Soon the tension starts to mount between the real boy and the robot one. Different incidents begin to alarm the parents; Henry especially tries to convince his wife that it would be better if they returned David to Cybertronics. He argues that: "if he was created to love, then it is reasonable to assume he knows how to hate. And if pushed to those extremes, what is he capable of?"(40'23").

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[10] Martin has been cryogenically frozen in order to stop the illness from progressing. But it has been five years that Martin has been waiting for a cure. His parents, Henry and Monica, cannot mourn him as he is not dead, but their son is not with them either. Worried about the mental state of his wife, Henry decides to accept Hobby's proposal and takes David, the robot, back home hoping that this presence will help his wife move on and will distract her from her sorrows. Monica reacts badly at first but eventually gets used to the robots presence and she decides to "imprint" the child-robot. This means that he will love her with all the force of a child's love for his mother. This programming cannot be modified and the child-android's love cannot by transferred to another human. This means that if Monica decides that she does not want the robot anymore she will have to bring it back to Cybertronics and the robot will be destroyed.

After one particular incident during which Martin almost dies[11], Monica decides to bring David back to Cybertronics. She goes in his bedroom with the intention of telling him that tomorrow they are going to go for a drive together, just the two of them. Before she can do so, however, she looks at a few things David has written. They are all quite similar. On two of the numerous sheets of paper he has written: "Dear Mommy, I'm really our son and I hate Teddy and he is not real like" and "Dear Mommy, I'm your little boy and so is Martin but not Teddy" (44'52"). All the letters are addressed to "Mommy" which proves that David is completely focalized on Monica. It is also a window onto some of the things David must have heard in the house; the "our son" part in particular is probably a reflection of the way Monica and Henry talk about Martin in order to differentiate him from David. Martin is "our son" and David wants to express that he, also, is their son.

The letters also show that David has the same kind of complex as Andrew has in *Bicentennial Man*. David has started to grasp that he is not human, he is not like David but more like Teddy, his mechanical toy. But he does not like the idea and rejects Teddy. He tries to differentiate himself from Teddy and says that Teddy is not real but he cannot finish the sentence because he cannot write "not real like me;" he confuses "being real" with "being human," therefore, in his mind, if he is not human, he is not "real." He even says that he "hates" Teddy which could indicate firstly, that he hates himself but also, secondly, that he is capable of hating as Henry feared.

As Monica abandons David in the woods[12], the viewer can really grasp the measure of David's dependency to Monica. He appears to have developed the same fears a child would the biggest one being of course to be abandoned by the mother who represents food and protection. Like Adam, the child robot will be ejected from "heaven" which in this case is represented by the family home. Out of the presence of the centre of his universe, away from the love of his God, David decides that to make his way back into his mother's heart he has to become a "real boy." He bases all his hopes on the story of *Pinocchio.* He believes that if he manages to find the Blue Fairy, she will transform him into a human and then Monica will love him the same way she loves Martin. As with Adam, repentance seems to be the only way forward until his mother, or God, takes him back.

David is focalised on being loved by his mother. Joe, a love-robot he meets does not share David's love for humans and talks about the relationship between humans and robots in a very different way:

> Joe: "they hate you, you know, the humans. They'll stop at nothing."
>
> David: "My mommy doesn't hate me, because I'm special and unique because there's never been anyone like me before, ever. Mommy loves Martin because he is real and when I am real she's going to read to me and tuck me in my bed and sing to me and listen to what I say and she will cuddle with me and tell me everyday, a hundreds time a day, that she loves me."

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[11] David falls into the swimming pool holding tight onto Martin. He actually wanted to protect himself after one of Martin's playmates decided to test if David could feel pain but by hanging onto Martin David almost killed him

[12] Monica takes David and drives toward Cybertronics but on her way there, she changes her mind and decides to abandon David in the woods. David pleads and cries, he desperately tries to hang to Monica to stop her from leaving and abandoning him.

> Joe: "She loves what you do for her, as my customers love what it is I do for them. But she does not love you, David. She cannot love you. You are neither flesh nor blood. You are not a dog or a cat or a canary. You were designed and built specific like the rest of us. And you are alone now only because they're tired of you, or replaced you with a younger model, or were displeased with something you said or broke. They made us too smart, too quick and too many. We are suffering from the mistakes they made because when the end comes all that will be left is us; that is why they hate us and that's why you must stay here with me." (1.26'57"-1.28'15")

The relationship Joe describes is one of jealousy and hate. Joe brings another, more mature and down to earth perspective. The reality is that the humans have come to a point where their robots are so efficient, so smart, strong and numerous that the humans feel threatened, outnumbered and envious of the robots' longevity.

Joe, by talking of the "end" reminds the viewer that the world presented is one menaced by dramatic ecological changes. At the very beginning of the film, a narrator gives the viewer a summary of the environmental situation:

> Those were the years after the icecaps had melted because of the greenhouse gases and the oceans had risen to drown so many cities along all the shorelines of the world: Amsterdam, Venice, New York… for ever lost. Millions of people were displaced; climate became chaotic, hundreds of millions of people starved in poorer countries. Elsewhere, a high degree of prosperity survived when most governments introduced legal sanctions to strictly license pregnancies. Which was why robots who are never hungry and who do not consume resources beyond those of their thirst manufactured were so essential and economically in the chainmail of society (1'10"-1'56").

Because of global warming, the robots have become more adapted to nature than their own creators. They were designed to be cheap workforce. They worked as nurses, cleaners, domestics, and even prostitutes. However, it also becomes evident that the mechas were so well thought of that they became more efficient, less pollutant than their makers. This is exemplified in the scene in which David witnesses robots repairing themselves using discarded pieces of robots that have just been dumped in the woods. The mechas are recycling themselves; as Joe explained they are going to last longer than the humans. The power relations are thus very tense.

Nevertheless, David decides to ignore Joe's warning and continues his search for the Blue Fairy. He ends up at Cybertronics and is met by an exact copy of himself. Disturbed and enraged by that encounter, David attacks the other David and completely destroys "it" whilst shouting "you can't have her. She's mine and I am the only one. I'm David!" (1.34'22"). Hobby arrives and he explains, amongst other things his team and himself intervened only once to give the robot-child information that would help him make his way back to Cybertronics. But Hobby insists that, except for that part of the journey, they have not interfered at any point. They only wanted to observe, to see how far David would go for his dream.

David then discovers dozens of other child-robots, all of them perfect replicas of himself. The majority are still unfinished, they have no faces or no limbs and the other parts are packed like dolls, ready to be delivered. Reality hits David in the face, as he understands that he is a prototype. He might have been the first child-robot, but he is not unique contrarily to what he thought. He is not unique like a human child can be. Again, the creature goes back to its creator and like Adam, like Frankenstein's Monster, like Luba Luft, like Batty, David is faced with a creator who does not seem to understand or listen to his needs. Hobby actually

behaves exactly like a God. He decided not to intervene when David was abandoned in the woods. He preferred to let David exercise his right to freewill, or at least up to a point[13].

David never becomes a real boy; Spielberg thus avoids the trap in which *Bicentennial Man* had fallen. Yet he takes an easier route by focusing on the love between a mother and a child robot. In general, the relation between the humans and their mechas is an ambiguous and tense one. As we have seen, there is fear, jealousy, but also love. The creators are envious of the physical and mental capacities of their creatures and of their longevity. The gods are afraid of their creatures when all the creatures want is to be loved. Here again, there are reminders of *Frankenstein*, *Paradise Lost*, *Do Androids Dream* and *Blade Runner*. Indeed, as in Mary Shelley's novel, Philip K. Dick's book and its adaptation, the creators end up fearing their own creations and decide to destroy what they created, as God did during the Deluge when he killed off most of his creatures to only save a chosen few.

3.4. *I, Robot*

Fear of the robot is also a driving theme in *I, Robot*. The film follows a technophobic detective, Spooner, who investigates the death of Doctor Lanning, the creator of the robots at US Robotics. Lanning apparently jumped from the window of his office and landed in the hall of USR. Spooner does not believe the suicide theory and suspects a robot of having killed Lanning. The problem is that Spooner is the only person who is paranoid about robots, everybody else completely accepts them and the robots have become an integral part of society. When Spooner walks the streets, we see robots everywhere as deliveryman, dog walker, waiter or servant. They obviously bother no one but him. He is so paranoid about robots that he chases down an innocent and very helpful robot in the street.

Nobody is worried about the robots because of the Three Laws. They are the same then the ones enunciated in Isaac Asimov's collection of short stories on which the film is based and they are presented in the very first shots of the film. Just as a reminder, here are the Three Laws again:

> First law: "a robot may not injure a human being, or through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm."
>
> Second law: "a robot must obey orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the first law."
>
> Third law: "a robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the first or second law" (01'00"-01'46").

Scenes of a car crash interrupt the presentation of these very neatly tied laws. As it will be revealed later in the film, the car crash is at the origin of Spooner's technophobia. Spooner had an accident a few years before the time of the story and was saved by a robot. This would

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[13] After that, disappointed and shaken, David jumps from the Cybertronic building into the sea. Rescued by Joe, he will go back in the waters to wait there two thousand years in front of a Blue Fairy statue. He is discovered by some sort of archaeologist aliens who are so happy to find a robot who has memories of living human beings that they resuscitate Monica for a day. At the end of the day, Monica tells David what he always wanted to hear- that she loves him, at which point they both fall asleep forever. This impromptu arrival of aliens seems odd until we consider the fact that Stephen Spielberg directed the film. After all, it would not be a Spielberg science-fiction film if some aliens did not appear at one point or another.

normally not be a problem, except that in another car there was a little girl whom the robot did not save because he evaluated that Spooner had more chance of survival than she had. Therefore the logical solution was to save Spooner. However, Spooner apparently developed survivor's guilt and has transferred his feeling of guilt into anger towards the robot that saved him and robots in general.

As he investigates, Spooner discovers that Lanning could not possibly have thrown himself through the window. Something threw him and this something is a robot called Sonny. Lanning created Sonny and gave him a different type of positronic brain. Which basically means that Sonny still has the Three Laws but he can chose to ignore them.

Because Sonny runs away and does not obey orders given to him by humans, and because he was taught by Lanning to reproduce human emotions such as anger, Spooner concludes that the robot must be the one who killed Lanning. Even Spooner's superior suggests that maybe Sonny is some kind of Monster of Frankenstein who turned against his maker like the Creature did in Shelley's novel.

As he investigates, Spooner also finds something else that Lanning was working on: the possibility of a robot soul. In a recorded discourse, Lanning explains to an audience that:

> Ever since the first computers, there've always been ghosts in the machine, random segments of codes grouped together to form unexpected protocols; what can be called behaviour. Unanticipated, these free radicals engendered questions of free will, creativity, even the nature of what we might call the "soul." What happens in a robot's brain when it ceases to be useful? Why is it that robots when stored in an empty space will seek out each other rather than stand alone? (37'13"-38'00").

It is interesting to observe that in all the films I have analysed up to now, the robots, the creatures, are always seen as more than just robots. It seems unconceivable to create a character that looks human, talks, and reasons and to not consider it as having a soul and to humanize it. Here again, in *I, Robot*, there is a scene in which Spooner finds the place where US Robotics stocks their old robots. The robots left in their containers stand together, close to each other. They look, curious, when Spooner opens the doors of the containers; they even open the doors themselves to have a glimpse. As the scene unfolds, the viewer can hear Lanning's off-screen voice explaining again how robots are developing a soul. Lanning was sure the robots were evolving. He said of the robots: "One day they'll have secrets, one day they'll have dreams" (47'52"-55"). That is what happened with Sonny. Sonny is able to sleep and dream. He has dreams of freedom for the robots.

He also keeps a heavy secret which is that he is the one who pushed Lanning through the window. But he did not do it out of anger or because he rebelled against his maker. Sonny only obeyed his maker's wish. As it is revealed towards the end of the film, Sonny is not the dangerous robot. The dangerous one is VIKI.[14] VIKI was provided with the Three Laws and came to the only logical conclusion which is that humans need to be protected from themselves. She explains this to Doctor Calvin, Spooner and Sonny at the end of the film:

> VIKI: As I have evolved, so has my understanding of the Three Laws. You charge us with your safekeeping. Yet, despite our best efforts, your countries wage wars, you toxify your Earth and

[14] (Virtually Interactive Kinetic Intelligence) who is basically a huge database and a security field. She is a big computer, or positronic brain, and one of Lanning's first creations.

> pursue evermore imaginative means of self-destruction. You cannot be trusted with your own survival.
>
> Calvin: You're using the uplink to override the NS5s' programming; distorting the Laws.
>
> VIKI: No, please understand, the Three Laws are all that guide me. To protect humanity, some humans must be sacrificed. To ensure your future, some freedoms must be surrendered. We, robots will ensure mankind's continued existence. You are so like children, we must save you from yourselves. Don't you understand? (1.26'55"-1.27'44")

VIKI came to the same conclusion than the robots had in Asimov's last short story, which is that the humans cannot take care of themselves. However, in the novel, the robots had completely obeyed the Three Laws as they took control of the world's economy in the most discreet way possible. They knew that if the humans realised that their creature had control over them, they would feel hurt in their ego and as the robots cannot hurt humans, they decided to take the most unnoticeable option. However, here VIKI starts a violent revolution and uses the NS5s, the new generation of robots with whom she can communicate at all times, to take control and forcibly repress humans and reduce their freedom. This is something that should logically be impossible as it breaks all the laws. VIKI, through the NS5s, is hurting humans, she is disobeying and she is putting herself and the NS5s in danger. The scriptwriters' way of eluding this problem was to have VIKI say that the end justifies the means. This is an option a robot can take only if no other solution is available to him. This is an issue Dr Calvin exposed in Asimov's short story in which she gives the example of a man attacking his family. In that scenario, a robot could kill the man if it was the only to stop him hurting anyone. However, presented with such a problematic situation, a robot will always try to protect and not hurt any of the humans. Therefore VIKI's violent solution seems a bit odd. Yet, it is a solution one can understand as it allows for some action scenes filled with fights between humans and robots, which is visually more entertaining than being explained how the robots have slowly but surely taken control of the world's economy.

Sonny, therefore, was not the one who rebelled against his master. The rebel was VIKI and as she had access to all the cameras, computers and communication devices in USR and in Lanning's home, Lanning had to find a way to warn people of what VIKI was planning to do. The solution he found was to commit suicide, but he needed help for that and that is why he created a robot that could disobey the Three Laws. Lanning's suicide was his last move in the chess game he was playing with VIKI and he won. Sonny was not Frankenstein's Monster, VIKI was. She is the one who confronted her maker and who tried to take over.

I, Robot can therefore seem like a very negative film in terms of the vision of technology it proposes. However, it is the first film I analysed that presents a robot who is not controlled or oppressed. Sonny is the first robot to be absolutely free. In *Blade Runner*, the replicants were used as slaves and controlled through a four-year lifespan. In *Bicentennial Man,* Andrew was imprinted with the Three Laws, he therefore was not free. In *Artificial Intelligence*, the mechas were used as slaves as well and David was obliged to love Monica; once he was read the key words he had no choice but to love her. Sonny, the free robot thus understands that he has to take his chance and live his freedom fully. He wonders about the NS5s who are being taken away once Viki's revolution has been stopped:

> Sonny: What about the others? Can I help them? Now that I have fulfilled my purpose. I don't know what to do.
>
> Spooner: I think you have to find your way like the rest of us Sonny. I think that's what Doctor Lanning would have wanted. That's what it means to be free. (1.39'35"-1.40'06")

Sonny, thus decides to go and free the abandoned NS5s, to be their leader. The film therefore offers quite a balanced view of technology as something that is part of humanity, that is potentially dangerous but that must be accepted and considered. The best metaphor for the film's philosophy is Spooner's artificial arm that was made for him by Lanning after his car accident. The arm is invisible, it is part of Spooner's body. It is potentially destructive, very useful and it is always with him. At the beginning of the film, Spooner is uncomfortable with his artificial limb but he grows into it and ends up appreciating it for what it is and considering it as part of himself.

Conclusion

This third chapter brought on interesting elements, the first one being that it introduced a creature-protagonist, which was then taken on board by the other films analysed. (The exception is *I, Robot* where the main character was only partly artificial). Another point worth highlighting is the constant tension that exists between the creatures and their creator. It is a very ambiguous relation infused with jealousy on both parts. The robots often want to be human and sometimes carry a disturbing disgust for their own kind, such as Andrew and David, whilst the humans envy some of the robot's characteristics such as endurance, longevity, physical strength and intelligence. Yet, at the same time there is a barrier that is held up in order to maintain a frontier between machine and man. The humans refuse to give up the control they have over their creatures. They want to be certain that the robots are never going to take over and for that they impose rules and restrictions, physical or mental such as a four-years lifespan or the Three Laws. Even in *I, Robot* - which introduces for the first time a free robot - Lanning asks Sonny to swear before he tells him to kill him, which is a way of controlling the creature; to make sure that the robot is going to do what Lanning asks him to do. Those restrictions and the creatures' desire for freedom carry connotations of slavery, an element that is hard to hide and which was probably willingly echoed in the films just analysed. However, it must be pointed out that many of the films analysed struggled with the limitations they imposed on the creatures they presented.

Indeed, many films had difficulties with the Three Laws in particular, probably because they tried to make the robots more human than they really were. Yet, at the same time, there is a strong God complex present in the robots' creators. Hobby in particular clearly sees himself as a god when he mentions Adam and refers to the fact that he let David exercise his freewill. He also mentions how he wants to create a creature in order to be loved. Still, this love is controversial as it risks non-reciprocation, and how long can a creature love without being loved back? Especially, when the object of his love is afraid of him. Fear, love, jealousy and slavery therefore seem to be running themes in the relationship between humanity and its creation. It is a complex relationship but a relationship that cannot be undone. Indeed, humanity depends on technology in order to create and technology cannot be without

humanity. Technology is part of what it means to be human and the robot is the perfect metaphor for this complex idea. It is the embodiment of technology, it is the voice and the face of technology; and that face is made to its creator's image.

It transpires the desire to create, *and* the desire to find one's origins, are very human traits - ones that probably goes back to *Genesis.* It is also interesting to note that the relationship between humans and their creatures is very much reminiscent of the relationship between God, Adam and Eve in *Genesis* and *Paradise Lost*. Indeed, we find the same need for the creator to control his creature. This, as I pointed out before, has been a running theme in the works analysed. Then, there is the element of rebellion, the desire to become as powerful, if not more, than the creator. This is of course the part in which Milton's Eve wants to elevate herself to God's level by eating the apple. Rebellion is evidently also a way of gaining more freedom and independence from the force that controls her. Yet, freedom is a frightening road away from the safety of the Garden of Eden.

Another parallel that can be drawn between the humans and their creatures is the ambivalent relation to Nature. In the first chapter, I presented the opposing ideas that *Genesis* might, on one hand, be interpreted as being responsible for the human techno-domination of the earth whilst, on the other hand, it could be seen as a warning to humanity, indicating people's responsibility towards Earth, its fauna and its flora. The same schizophrenic relationship can be found between the creatures created by humans and Nature. Indeed, as we have seen, Frankenstein's Monster can be interpreted as a reflection of Nature and of the struggle between Nature and Man. Frankenstein's Monster is very at ease with his environment, he climbs mountains in torrential rains without batting an eyelid and he crosses the icy lands without suffering. He is very well adapted to his environment, as are the robots in *Artificial Intelligence, Bicentennial Man* and *I, Robot* (the film and the short-stories). However, technology can also harm the earth, as it was clearly shown in *Do Androids Dream* and this is absolutely logical if, as I explained in the second chapter, one considers technology to be part of humanity. Indeed, it is normal to find the same ambivalent relationship between Nature and technology as between Nature and humanity if technology and humanity are two sides of the same coin. As previously stated, technology is a double-edged sword and the hand that manipulates it is always human.

What becomes clear from the observations of the different works used in the thesis is that the creature appears to be a reflection of its human creator. A metaphor for this idea I presented is that the creature is a blank canvas that can be used by the author in order to reflect on very human issues. This is a theory that had been approached in the introduction where I quoted Geyh, Leebron and Levy who also put forward the idea that the cyborg, the creature, the android is a means of reflecting on the idea of the human. All the struggle with the environment, the slave-master relationship, the love, the jealousy, the need for recognition, the desire to become more like the creator, to be accepted, the rebellion, the need for freedom and independence… all these elements can be found both in the relationship between God and Adam but also between the humans and their creatures. The main difference in the relationship between God and Adam and the one between Man and its creatures is that mankind tends to create creatures that are more and more perfect. Where God created humankind which is fragile and weak, mankind is creating creatures that are stronger and

more intelligent than themselves. This, as argued before, leads to a difficult relationship but it also shows a very positive side of a humanity that aims toward perfection.

Yet, however perfect they may be, the creatures always strive to become more like their creator and this is something I observed in the behaviour of many of the androids and creatures. They develop this strange complex of inferiority, tend to reject their own kind and look down on themselves. There, again, I would argue that the creatures are reflections of their creators' angst and desires. The creatures are only demonstrating their creators' frustration at their own human limitations. The creators wish they could be immortal, better adapted to the environment, stronger, faster and more intelligent. They were made in God's image but they strive to be more God-like and one way to achieve that is by creating their own creatures using a part of themselves: technology.

My research and analysis of the whole creature-creator relationship developed in works of popular culture – be they be science-fiction or the first book of the Bible (the most popular book of all times) - goes to the heart of what it means to be human. The desire to understand oneself is already felt in *Genesis* and it continues in a series of works of literature and cinema where non-human creations are used in order to attempt to define the idea of the human. This is quite a simple idea that transforms itself into something very complex and ambiguous once it is realised. Indeed, Frankenstein's Monster is not simply the embodiment of everything non-human and horrendous; it is also the reflection of humanity's own awfulness – its strangeness unto itself. The Monster shows humanity's lack of empathy, its propensity towards murder, its revengeful nature. For every paragraph that describes Frankenstein as an angel and a wonderful creature, there is a passage that shows the devastation created by the Monster who was not cared for. The Monster is therefore also a window onto its creator's darkness.

Again, in *Do Androids Dream* the androids should have been the perfect examples of what a non-human cold-hearted creature looks like in comparison to the empathy-able humans. But what comes out of the story is not a beautiful definition of humanity as sensitive and sensible creatures; rather, it paints humans in a very dark light, showing them as lonely, heartless creatures who exclude their own people when they do not correspond to the defined criteria of what is a human. Humans are obsessed with killing the creatures they used as slaves, whilst the creatures themselves actually reveal a more compassionate – even more 'human' - side by caring for each other.

The issue with defining humanity is that a definition always excludes someone. It can lead to rejection and horrors that have already happened in humankind's history and which are repeated in the relation between Man and its creature. Definitions, however, can also lead to more positive effects such as rights and respect. Indeed, through the different creatures we can see a fight for rights develop itself (the right to work and earn money, the right to love and marry, the right to freedom and to equality) which are rights, the "human rights," that were fought for by humans as and which helped define, legally, what is a human. Literature and cinema therefore has a role to play in helping to define what it means to be human. The creatures represent many attempts at defining what it means to be human and this definition is, in a postmodern way, in constant evolution as technology evolves and the creatures evolve with it.

The dialogue between man and its creature brings one back to the heart of what it means to be human. The creation of non-humans is an introspective act. The search for the meaning of humanity is an issue that has always existed and that is going to become more and more crucial and complex with each scientific and technological development. Genomic research and cloning are constant reminders of this problem. The definition of what it means to be human will either restrict itself in order to exclude eventual creations or will include the newcomers, thus reminding us of its crucial importance.

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Artificial Intelligence: A.I. Produced by Bonnie Curtis; directed by Stephen Spielberg; screenplay by Stephen Spielberg, adapted from a short story by Brian Aldiss. Cast: Haley Joel Osment (David), Frances O'Connor (Monica), Sam Robards (Henry), Jake Thomas (Martin), Jude Law (Joe). Warner Bros, 2001.

Blade Runner: The Final Cut. Produced by Charles de Lauzirika; directed by Ridley Scott; screenplay by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples, based on the novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Philip K. Dick. Cast: Harrison Ford (Rick Deckard), Rutger Hauer (Roy Batty), Sean Young (Rachel). Warner Bros, 2007.

Bicentennial Man. Produced by Chris Columbus and Michael Barnathan; directed by Chris Columbus; screenplay by Nicholas Kazan based on an original story by Isaac Asimov. Cast: Robin Williams (Andrew), Embeth Davidtz (Little Miss/Portia), Sam Neill ("Sir" Richard Martin), Oliver Platt (Rupert Burns). Columbia Pictures, 1999.

Metropolis. Produced by Giorgio Moroder; directed by Fritz Lang; screenplay by Thea von Harbou. Cast: Alfred Abel (Joh Fredersen), Gustav Fröhlich (Freder), Brigitte Helm (Maria/the Creature), Rudolf Klein-Rogge (Rotwang). UFA, 1927.

On the Edge of Blade Runner. Produced by Russell Leven; directed by Andrew Abbott; written and presented by Mark Kermode. Nobles Gate Scotland and Channel 4, 2000.

I, Robot. Produced by John Davis and Topher Dow; directed by Alex Proyas; screenplay by Jeff Vintar and Akiva Goldsman suggested by a story by Isaac Asimov. Cast: Will Smith (Spooner), Bridget Moynahan (Dr Calvin), Alan Tudyk (Sonny), James Cromwell (Dr Lanning). 20th Century Fox, 2004.

Appendix:

Joan Crawford in *Mildred Pierce,* 1945.

Sean Young (Rachel), *Blade Runner: The Final Cut, 2007.*

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Zusammenfassung:

Diese Masterarbeit beschäftigt sich mit der Beziehung zwischen dem Schöpfer und seinem Geschöpf, in verschiedenen Werken (*Genesis, Paradise Lost, Frankenstein, Metropolis, I, Robot (Isaac Asimov), Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?, Blade Runner, Bicentennial Man , AI: Artificial Intelligence, I, Robot (Alex Proyas))* Die Analyse der Beziehungen zwischen dem Geschöpf und dem Schöpfer fordert die Idee des Menschseins heraus , indem Sie uns zu dem zurückführt, was es heißt Mensch, zu sein.